THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE, ROMANCE, THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XIII. R. BONNER, {EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR, NO. 44 ANN-STREET. NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 20, 1858 TERMS, {$2 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 50.

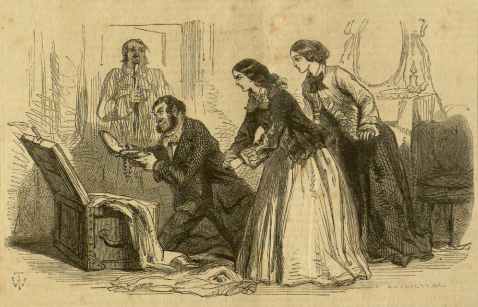
THE GRAVE OF MOSES.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"No man knoweth his sepulchre unto this day"

Lawgiver of the Hebrews, who didst stand
On Sinai's summit, face to face with God,
And thence descending, all majestic bear
The sacred tablets by His finger traced,—
A glory on thy brow that kept aloof
The awe-struck people,—is thy hallowed tomb
Unvisited, unchronicled, unknown?
How many an eye amid the shaded dells
And clustering terebinths of Moab, sought
That place of rest in vain! 'Twas not for man
To find the angel-buried.
Age on age
Swept by in long procession, and went down,—
And men of doubtful glory, proudly reared
High towering obelisk and monument,
For their own sculptured effigies, but still
None knoweth of thy sepulchre.
'Tis well!
What if they did? 'Twere nothing unto thee,
And unto them but little.
Thou hast left
Thine epitaph in deeds, that all may read,
And words of wisdom in the Book Divine.
So teach us, Spirit of all Grace, to hold
The casket for our clay of small account,
But let our living memory, clad in robes
Of truth and goodness, walk its daily round
Among mankind, and point their souls to Thee.
Hartford, Conn., Jan. 1858.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.



THE RESULT OF SEARCHING THE TRUNK OF AGNES DARKE.

THE BRIDE OF AN EVENING.

A ROMANCE OF THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE ISLAND PRINCESS;" "THE DESERTED WIFE;" &c., &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXIX.

AGNES FALLS INTO THE TRAP.

I see the cloud and the tempest near,
The voice of the troubled tide I hear—
Thy bosom's barque on the surge I see,
But, wanderer, thy loved one is there with thee.
L. M. DAVIDSON.

The pale clouds that had been gathering all the afternoon now overcast the whole sky. It was beginning to snow as they alighted at the parsonage gate.

"Run in! for mercy sake, run in!" cried Mrs. Willoughby, appearing at the hall door.

They lost no time in obeying her summons.

"We are always bound to have at least one deep snow in March, and I think that this is the very article!" said Dr. Heine as he beat the light flakes from his own garments and gently brushed them from those of Agnes, before entering the neat hall.

Mrs. Willoughby shook hands with her brother, and embraced Agnes—thus giving both a warm welcome.

"You must nurse her a little—she is very much worn down," said Dr. Heine, with a glance full of affectionate solicitude directed towards Agnes.

"She does look pale and anxious. But in our quiet home she will soon recover," replied the minister's wife, tenderly kissing her guest, as she led her into the bright little parlor of the parsonage, and seated her upon the sofa by the fire.

How different was the atmosphere here! Agnes felt as if she had escaped from a house of sin and passed into a home of purity, safety, and comfort.

Mrs. Willoughby, with sisterly care, relieved her of her outer garments, and took them from the room, while Dr. Heine placed a footstool under her feet, and arranged the cushions at the back of her head.

"There! rest, dear Agnes," he said. "You have tended others so long, that now you must in your turn be cared for."

"This is indeed like the repose of paradise," said Agnes, as she yielded herself up to the comforts of her position.

Doctor Heine mended the fire, and smiled at his guest.

When Mrs. Willoughby re-entered the room she rang for lights, saying that though it was early in the afternoon, still as it was so dark with snow-clouds, the windows had as well be closed, and the lamps lighted, "Which will make us feel all the more cozy and comfortable," she added, as she shut the blinds, and let down the thick crimson curtains.

When the neat and smiling little maid of the parsonage appeared with the lighted lamps, which she placed at each side of the mantle-piece, her mistress said:

"And now, Alice, lay the cloth for supper in this room, which is so much warmer than the dining-hall."

The little maid curtsied obedience, and with the help of Ernest, who started up to assist her, she wheeled the table into the middle of the floor, and then vanished from the room.

And soon she returned, and spread the snow-white damask cloth, and arranged the pure white sevres china upon the table. Then she brought the crystal lump-sugar, the rich cream, the light biscuits, and the golden, fresh butter, and set them in order upon the board. Her mistress went to the parlor cupboard, and produced her store of preserves and cakes. The clear, crimson currant jelly, the golden pomegranate, the ruby quince, the emerald citron sweatmeats, rich queen cakes, delicate lady-fingers, and fragrant crullers—all the work of her own hands, were arranged in cut glass saucers, or silver filigree baskets, and placed upon the table.

"Shall I fetch the tea urn now, madam?" inquired the little maiden.

"No, child, not just yet; we must wait a few moments for Mr. Willoughby. He stepped over to Piedmont, Agnes, to see the old lady," said Mrs. Willoughby, as she took a seat near her guest.

Then there followed some kind inquiries as to the present condition of the suffering invalid at Farquier.

"You go out so little, Agnes, that you do not hear as much as I do. But do you know that Mrs. Henry's illness is considered a very mysterious affair. People cannot imagine why she should take so great an interest in the fate of a man who is almost an entire stranger to her—one whom she has not met more than three times in her life. And how do you think the wise-acres attempt to account for it?"

"I do not know indeed, madam," replied the young girl.

"Why, Agnes, they dare even to say that Mrs. Alma Henry was in love with Mr. Godfrey Dulanie."

"That is infamous!" exclaimed Agnes, indignantly.

"Aye! and they pity Doctor Henry—such a good man! such a devoted husband!—to be so wronged!"

"I have nothing more to say," said Agnes, flushing crimson at this slander of her friend.

"It is beneath comment, certainly," admitted Mrs. Willoughby. "But a truce to gossip! Agnes, my sweet sister, I have such a pretty little chamber for you. It is the room in the wing that opens on the front piazza, and is furnished with the white enameled cottage-chamber furniture, and has the white lace curtains to the windows. A perfect bower of beauty is your bedroom, sweet Agnes!"

"You are too good—you overwhelm me with kindness!" replied the grateful girl.

"Hush!" whispered the lady, bending close to her ear—"I please myself in serving my sweet *sister*. Yes—I know it all, Agnes! And you are not to take another situation, or leave us at all any more, until you leave us as my brother's wife, to take the head of his establishment."

Agnes blushed, with mingled emotion of grateful joy and girlish shame, while her lover turned upon his sister and herself a beaming smile of pleasure.

"And now we will not wait another moment for Mr. Willoughby, who, ten to one, is taking supper with the Piedmont ladies. And you look so weary, love, that you shall have your tea, and then retire to your sweet little room to take a good night's rest; for to-morrow we are to have a dinner party to meet the bishop who is expected here; and my brother's affianced bride must look fresh and bright to help me receive them," added the lady, as she arose and rang the bell.

"Bring up the tea urn, Alice," she said to the little maiden, who appeared at the door.

Alice curtsied and withdrew, and presently returned with the silver-service, which she placed upon the table. Chairs were set, and at the invitation of the hostess, the little circle of three gathered around the board.

"You take black tea, I believe, Agnes?—Ernest, you like rice waffles: there are some very nice hot ones that Alice is offering at your elbow. Help Agnes and yourself," said the lady, on hospitable cares intent.

As her brother turned to obey there was a loud ringing at the front door bell.

"That is Mr. Willoughby now—just in time! Run, Alice, and let your master in!"

The little maid hastened to comply.

"I am glad he has come. Tea always tastes better when he is at the table," said the affectionate wife, as she put sugar and cream into a fourth cup, ready to fill up.

"The little maid came in, saying—

"Please, madam, it isn't master. It is a man from Piedmont, as says how master can't just yet leave Madam Auderly, who is took very ill, and wants the doctor directly."

"Madam Auderly ill? I am very sorry!" exclaimed Mrs. Willoughby; while Ernest Heine arose from his untasted supper, and hurried to the door to make more particular inquiries. In a few moments he came back, great-coated and capped, ready for his ride, saying—

"It is an attack of apoplexy. I must hasten to her immediately!"

"But, dear me! won't you stop and get your supper before turning out in this snow storm?" inquired his sister, anxiously.

"No! there is no time—a moment's delay may be fatal to her life! Good-bye!"

"When will you be back?"

"I cannot tell. It may be not until morning. Do not sit up for me!" replied the doctor, bowing and hurrying away.

"There! you see what it is to be a physician, Agnes. He never sits down to a meal with any certainty of being able to finish it before he is called off! or gets into his warm bed without a reasonable probability of being called up at midnight! And you may partly judge what may be the lot of a physician's wife! Draw up, Agnes. 'Let the world slide,' while we take our tea. Alice, these waffles are cold; bring a plate of hot ones."

"I feel sorry that Madam Auderly is ill," said Agnes.

"My dear, so am I, but—it does not take away my appetite. Here comes the hot waffles—take one."

At that moment there was a second ringing of the door bell.

"My gracious! Surely, people think we hold a reception here to-night. But that must be Mr. Willoughby at last. Run, Alice, and see!" exclaimed the lady.

The little servant flew to open the door.

"Those are strange voices. Who can they be?" inquired Mrs. Willoughby, listening.

Her question was almost immediately answered by the re-appearance of the maid, saying—

"If you please, ma'am, two men asking for Miss Agnes Darke."

"For me?" exclaimed Agnes, in surprise.

"For Agnes!" ejaculated the lady, in astonishment.

"Yes, ma'am: please, here they are," replied the maid, as two men, recognized by Mrs. Willoughby as constables, entered the parlor.

They bowed awkwardly, and hesitated a little, while the ladies gazed upon them in perplexity.

"You——did you wish to see any one here?—Have you any business with us?—or—is there not some mistake?" inquired Mrs. Willoughby, who was the first to recover from her surprise.

"It's no mistake, I reckon, mum. Which of you ladies is Miss Agnes Darke?" inquired the foremost man, producing a document from his coat pocket.

"Why, this young lady is Miss Darke; but you can have no possible business with her!"

"Well, yes, mum, we have a little, I reckon."

"But what can it be at this time of night? Does any one need her?"

"Well, yes, mum, I reckon the magistrate wants her just a little."

"As a witness in some new case—what a bother!"

"Well, I reckon I might as well out with it, mum. It is a very onpleasant thing; but you see, to make a long matter short, I have a warrant for her arrest."

"ARREST!"

"Well, yes, mum, I'm sorry to say."

Both ladies gazed with renewed astonishment upon the speaker.

"But upon what possible ground can Miss Agnes Darke be arrested?" inquired Mrs. Willoughby, in dismay.

"I do not owe a debt in the world!" exclaimed Agnes, in consternation.

"It's not for *debt*, young lady," said the constable.

"In the name of Heaven, *what* is it for, then?" inquired Mrs. Willoughby.

"Miss Agnes Darke is arrested upon the charge of theft."

"THEFT!"

"Yes, ladies, I'm sorry to say."

Agnes covered her face with her hands, and sank back half fainting in her chair, while Mrs. Willoughby, panic-stricken, gazed upon the officers.

"Don't be frightened, mum. If the young lady is innocent, as I would lay my life she *is*, judging from her looks, it will all come out right before the justice," said the constable.

"But by whom is she accused—good Heaven—of theft?"

"By Doctor Henry, her late employer, mum."

"It is a plot! oh, it is a plot for my destruction!" gasped Agnes, in a dying voice.

"By Doctor Henry! it cannot be! Doctor Henry is an honorable man, who would die rather than bring such a charge against an innocent girl!" exclaimed the lady.

"But here it stands, mum, in black and white, under the county seal."

"Oh! it is a plot! it is a plot for my ruin, if you knew all!" groaned Agnes.

"Be patient, dear girl! It is some grievous mistake that will be explained," said Mrs. Willoughby.

"It is no mistake, I reckon, mum—I mean so far as the document goes. As to the young lady, I believe it *is* a mistake, and will be proved one. But, mum, our time is short, and we have also another warrant here, authorizing us to search the effects of Miss Agnes Darke for certain property said to have been stolen by her."

"Hold your tongue for decency's sake, man! Never repeat such things of a respectable young lady."

"Certainly, mum; but it is in the warrant which we must proceed to execute. Will you be so good as to show us where certain trunks, boxes, etc., brought by Miss Darke from Farquier, can be found, that we may examine them?"

"I brought but one small trunk, which held all my things. It has not been opened since I came here. Dear Mrs. Willoughby, show them where it is, that they may examine it, and satisfy themselves!" cried Agnes, seizing this opportunity of vindicating, as she supposed, her innocence.

"What degradation!" exclaimed Mrs. Willoughby, bitterly.

"Not at all, mum—not at all. We're all liable to suffer injustice of one sort or another, and if the missing articles should not be found in the young lady's possession, why, so much the better for her," said the constable.

"Oh, yes, madam, yes! so it will be! I must not be too proud to submit to an investigation that will prove my innocence. Let them search," said Agnes, earnestly.

"Alas, my dear, we could not prevent them if if we wished to do so; therefore, we have no choice. Well, sirs, follow me; I will conduct you to Miss Darke's chamber," said Mrs. Willoughby, taking up a candle, and leading the way from the parlor.

The two constables attended her to the hall, but there one turned back to beckon Agnes.

"Need I come, too?" she inquired, naively.

"Certainly, young lady; you are under arrest, and we dare not lose sight of you," answered the principal officer.

Agnes without demur followed them across the hall, and into the pretty chamber in the wing that had been appropriated to her use.

There under the window sat the little black leather trunk that was to be examined. Mrs. Willoughby pointed it out to the officers.

"Where is the key?" asked the first constable.

"Oh! I forgot; here it is," said Agnes, producing it from her pocket.

The officer knelt and unlocked the trunk.

A poor but clean and neatly folded wardrobe was all that the lifting of the lid revealed. As these were taken out and unfolded, article by article, nothing was discovered but the nice and orderly habits of the owner, until at last, when they had reached the bottom of the trunk, the constable exclaimed—

"Ah! good Heaven! here is the missing property!" and lifted a red morocco casket, which he opened, displaying to their astounded eyes a rich set of oriental pearls.

"In the name of Heaven, what is the meaning of this, Agnes?" inquired Mrs. Willoughby in horror.

"It means that I am betrayed and ruined!" exclaimed the wretched girl, in a deep, sepulchral voice, as, with a face overspread with the ghastly pallor of death, she sunk into the nearest chair.

The officers of justice coolly proceeded with their business.

"Just read over the list of missing articles, to see if they are all here, Jarvis," said the first constable McNab, holding the casket in his hand.

The other obeyed, reading from the paper that he held in his hand.

"'One red morocco casket, containing jewelry, as follows: One pearl tiara, one pair of pearl ear-rings, one pearl necklace, one pearl brooch, one pearl bracelet, the whole valued at six thousand dollars;' is that right?"

"Yes, and here they all are," said the constable, who, having identified the property, closed the casket. Then, turning towards the spot where Agnes sat in a deathlike stupor, he said—

"I am very sorry for this, young lady; I am afraid it will go very hard with you."

"Agnes, *will* you explain this?" cried Mrs. Willoughby, in deep distress.

"As far as I can. I never set eyes upon that casket before this hour. It was put into my trunk with the design to ruin me, I am sure of it!" gasped the almost expiring girl.

"Oh, Agnes! do not say so, my child! No human being could be so diabolical! Besides, what motive could any one have to ruin you? You have no enemies!"

"You think, then," said Agnes, in a hollow voice, "that I am capable of——"

"No, no; my life upon your innocence!" exclaimed Mrs. Willoughby, eagerly interrupting her, "but some one doubtless put the casket in your trunk for safety, and you, unconscious of its presence there, brought it away; and such will be proved the case, no doubt. What I *do* find fault with in this matter, is Doctor Henry's inexcusable haste in charging an innocent and respectable girl with degrading crime! I shall not soon forgive his rashness!"

"Ah! do you think it was *rashness?* It was not rashness, but the most deliberate villainy!" exclaimed the wretched girl, in bitterness of spirit.

"Agnes, your wrongs make you unjust! Believe me, this is a mistake which will soon be righted!" said Mrs. Willoughby, struggling with her own sense of shame and grief, that she might in some sort lift up the fallen head of the poor young victim before her.

"Well, mum," said McNab, "I am sorry to hurry this affair; but it is late, and we have a long way to go to the squire's, so that the young lady had better be getting on her things."

"Getting on her things? For what?"

"To go before Squire Jessup, mum."

"Surely, surely you will not take her out this stormy night?"

"'Bliged to do so, mum. Warrant is peremptory."

"Oh! Agnes, my child, what a calamity! Oh, good Heaven! how I wish Mr. Willoughby or my brother were here! Sirs, cannot you wait an hour until I send for my husband and brother, who are at Piedmont?"

"Couldn't possibly do it, mum; we have already stayed too long," said the constable. Then turning to Agnes, he added—"Come, young lady; come, hurry up!"

But the poor girl sat with her hands clasped convulsively upon her knees, the grayness of death spread over her face, and her eyes wildly staring into vacancy.

"Come, now, you know, this ain't a-goin' to do. You've got to get up and go along with us; and the longer you stop us, and the more trouble you give, the worse it will look, you know," said the officer, laying his hand upon her shoulder.

Agnes shrank and shivered at that degrading touch, but seemed too lost in shame and grief and fear to rise.

"Come, miss, come, I hope you don't mean to give us any trouble," said the man, attempting to rouse her.

But Agnes shuddered, and seemed about to swoon.

"Come, now, none o' that, you know, 'cause we're up to all those tricks! Be a sensible young woman, and come along with us quiet," continued the officer, putting his arms about her waist, and lifting her upon her feet.

"Oh, my God! my God! has it come to this? Oh, Agnes, that I should ever have lived to see this day! What can I do for you, my lamb?" said Mrs. Willoughby, wringing her hands in agony.

"You can do nothing—nothing; you must leave me to my fate!" exclaimed the hapless victim, between spasmodic gasps.

"If you would wish to do her any service, mum, control your own feelings, and get her things for her to put on," said the constable.

"Yes—get them, dear, get them; the sooner I go—the sooner it is over—the better," said Agnes, in the same gasping voice.

Mrs. Willoughby, pale and trembling, and too strongly affected for tears, took the little black silk bonnet and black cloth shawl from the bed, upon which they had been placed, and brought them to Agnes.

"You are as white as marble, your hands are as cold as ice; you shake as with an ague," said the lady, as she tied the little bonnet on the head, and wrapped the shawl around the shoulders of the poor girl.

"A glass of wine, mum, for the Lord's sake, a glass of wine for her, or we shall never be able to get her alive to the magistrate's office," said the constable.

Mrs. Willoughby ran out, and returned with the required restorative, which she applied at the lips of the almost expiring girl, who pushed it away, saying—

"No, no; I cannot—I will not; if I die, so much the better; oh, you ought to know that."

And no persuasion would induce her to change her purpose.

"Well, she *is* the obstinatest!" said the constable, as he supported her from the house to the chaise that was waiting to take her to the magistrate's.

"You will tell him that I am innocent, but that he must resign me," said Agnes, turning an appealing gaze upon her friend.

"He needs not to be told that you are innocent, and he will never forsake you. I will send for him immediately; he will lose no time in following you," replied Mrs. Willoughby, in a voice broken by anguish, as she pressed the poor girl to her bosom, before resigning her to the care of the officer.

And the next moment Agnes was lifted into the chaise, which was driven rapidly away.

"Oh! surely this is some horrible dream!" said Mrs. Willoughby with a shudder, as she returned to the house, forgetting, in her great trouble, even to shake off the snow that whitened all her dress.

She lost not a moment in despatching a messenger with the following note to Piedmont.

Agnes Darke has just been arrested upon a charge of grand larceny. For Heaven's sake, as soon as you can leave Madam Auderly, hasten hither.

Ernest Heine was standing at the bedside of his patient when that note was put into his hand. He glanced over it, passed his hand before his eyes as if to clear his vision, read it again, flushed, grew pale, seized his hat, and without a word of explanation hurried from the house, leaving the astonished family to suppose that some patient in the last extremity had summoned him away.

In an almost incredibly short time, Ernest reached the parsonage and rushed into the parlor, where he found his sister pacing up and down the floor, and wringing her hands in great distress.

"Ida, what *is* the meaning of this?" he exclaimed, in breathless anxiety.

"What I wrote! She has been arrested for grand larceny, at the suit of Dr. Henry."

"False! false! Good Heaven, you are mad or dreaming to say such a thing! Where is she? Let me see her!"

"She has gone off to W. in custody of the constable. Sit down, Ernest, or stand if you must, only be quiet three minutes, while I tell you all about it," said Mrs. Willoughby, who then, in a hurried and rather incoherent manner, related the whole history of the arrest.

"It is a mistake! It is infamous—infamous in Doctor Henry so rashly to judge and so cruelly to charge an innocent girl." And without another word he rushed out of the house, mounted his horse, and galloped rapidly off toward W.

CHAPTER XXX.

MIDNIGHT WITHOUT AND WITHIN.

She feared—she felt that something ill
Lay on her life, so deep and chill—
That there was wrong and shame she knew;
That some one was the cause—but who?
She had forgotten:—Did she breathe?
Could this be still the earth beneath,
The sky above, and men around;
Or were they fiends who now so frowned
On one before whose eye, each eye
Till now had smiled in sympathy? BYRON.

Meanwhile through night, and storm, and darkness, the open chaise labored.

Stung and blinded by the falling and freezing snow, the driver on the front seat could scarcely keep the road, and for safety trusted less to his own senses than to his horses' instinct.

Covered with sleet, Agnes and the constable shrunk and cowered into the back cushion. Yet for the horror that seemed to freeze her central heart, she could scarcely feel the surrounding coldness.

A long, dismal and dangerous drive brought them at length to W. and to the house of Squire Jessup.

A single light shone through a window in the little wing now used by the squire as his office.

Before this wing the chaise stopped. The driver left his seat, and the policeman alighted and handed out Agnes, and led her, half palsied with cold and terror, into the office.

The magistrate was seated at his table, and near him also sat Dr. Henry.

As the eyes of the squire fell upon Agnes, where she stood, covered with sleet, and half fainting with shame, and grief, and fear, he could not forbear turning upon her accuser a questioning and rebuking look, as though he would have asked—

"Why force this fragile creature out on such a bitter night as this?"

Doctor Henry understood the tacit inquiry, and answered as if it had been uttered—

"You will remember the great value of the articles purloined, and the urgent necessity of haste in order to recover them. Hence the need of this prompt arrest."

"Draw forward that leathern chair, McNab," said Mr. Jessup, addressing the constable. And when the man had obeyed, he turned to Agnes and said—

"Sit down, young lady."

Agnes mechanically dropped into the chair, and because she felt half suffocated, threw the veil from her face.

"So young and beautiful, and so depraved!" the magistrate murmured, as he gazed upon the soft and lovely brunette face, with its languishing dark eyes and clustering black ringlets.

"Ah," sighed Dr. Henry, "it is with the deepest pain that I appear here as her accuser. Nothing but despair of reforming her by moral suasion—nothing but the necessity of giving her a sharp lesson—(for this is not her first offence)—nothing, in short, but a strong sense of duty could have constrained me to prosecute her."

The justice looked at the pale girl before him, and groaned for pity.

"I am innocent, indeed, sir, I am," said poor Agnes, clasping her hands and raising her eyes pleadingly to the magistrate's face.

"Poor child! God grant you may be proved so!" said the squire.

"Did your worship, in the whole course of your official career, ever happen to meet with any one who was guilty?" sneeringly inquired Doctor Henry.

The magistrate did not notice the sarcasm, his eyes were fixed upon Agnes Darke.

"You found the casket?" inquired the doctor of the policeman.

"Yes, sir."

"Where?"

"In her trunk."

"Very well—Mr. Jessup, what are we waiting for?" asked the accuser, impatiently, addressing the squire.

"Nothing, sir; I am ready to proceed with the case if the prisoner is ready; but she has no defence," said the magistrate.

"Nor I any advocate; we stand upon equal terms," answered the accuser.

Very unwillingly the magistrate proceeded with his office.

Dr. Henry being sworn, deposed that Agnes Darke had lived in his house as the companion of his wife, for about fifteen months; that, during the last few months he had missed many articles which had been traced to her possession; that upon her apparent repentance he had frequently forgiven her; but that finding her perfectly incorrigible, he had, at length, warned her to leave his house; that even then, wishing to shield her reputation, and so give her a chance of reform, he had in discharging forborne to accuse her, so that no one had reason to suppose that she had been dismissed, or had left the house at any other than her own will; that soon after her departure he had chanced to open a bureau, in which the most valuable articles of family jewelry were kept, and missing his wife's casket of pearls, had naturally suspected Agnes Darke of the theft, and immediately made a requisition for a search warrant; and that, in justification of his proceeding, he begged the magistrate to swear and examine the constable who had served the writ.

The officer being sworn, deposed to the finding of the casket of jewels in the possession of the accused.

The magistrate, whose first instinctive belief in Agnes Darke's innocence now yielded to the force of evidence against her, turned towards her a countenance as full of sorrow as of severity, and inquired—

"What have you to say to this charge, young woman?"

"That I am innocent! as God liveth, I am!" answered Agnes, clasping her hands in agony.

"Your simple assertion cannot be taken against the weight of the testimony, unless you can satisfactorily account for the presence of the jewelry in your trunk," said Mr. Jessup.

"Sir, I did not know that the casket was in my trunk, until the constable took it out. I never even set eyes upon the jewelry it contains, or knew so much as its existence until the moment in which the constable displayed it to my view."

"How do you suppose, then, that it came into your trunk?"

The face of the young girl crimsoned with blushes; she did not reply.

"If you can explain how it came there without your knowledge or connivance, you had better do so," said the squire.

The poor girl struggled bravely against the overwhelming sense of shame that crushed her spirit to the dust, as amid burning blushes she answered—

"Sir, I may not be able to prove the fact; but I think they were put there by Doctor Henry, with the view to destroy me."

"YOUNG WOMAN! beware how you try to criminate a gentleman of Dr. Henry's indisputable integrity!" exclaimed the magistrate, indignant at what he supposed to be the base artifice of the accused.

"It is like her!" said Doctor Henry, coolly.

"What motive pray, Miss Darke, could you suppose Dr. Henry to possess for destroying you?"

Agnes strove more strenuously against the crushing sense of shame, and her cheeks, and brow, and neck were flushed with still more fiery blushes as she answered—

"I must speak the truth, come what will of it, sir. This man, once my employer and now my accuser, pursued me with a sinful suit, threatening to ruin me if I did not——"

Unable to complete the sickening sentence, Agnes dropped her face in both her hands, and shuddered as with an ague.

This action, that was indeed the effect of maiden modesty, looked so like conscious guilt, that the magistrate gazed upon her with his brows knit into the severest frown.

"It is precisely like all her conduct," said Doctor Henry. "You will now have an opportunity of witnessing that girl's double-distilled duplicity."

"Young woman," said the magistrate, sternly, "when you were first brought before me, your tender years and—well, yes—your refined looks, rather inclined me to think too leniently of your case, and to criticise too hastily the course of your accuser. The wickedness with which you have endeavored to shield yourself by criminating a gentleman of Doctor Henry's unimpeachable character, has convinced me that you are one with whom it will not do to deal charily. The evidence against you is also convicting, and obliges me to bind you over to appear at the next session of the criminal court. Have you bail?"

"Sir?" asked Agnes, lifting her now pale face from her hands.

"I asked you have you bail?"

"I do not understand you, sir," said the poor girl, to whom the forms of law were incomprehensible.

The magistrate explained what was needed.

For a moment her face brightened. She thought of her lover, and of how readily he would become her surety; but the beam was very transient; it passed away as she resolved to refrain from mentioning his name, lest the unmerited shame, that had fallen upon *her*, should be reflected upon *him*.

"I have no bail, sir," she answered.

"Have you really no friend to whom you could apply in this emergency?" inquired the magistrate, who, against what he considered his "better judgment," was again beginning to pity her.

"I have none to whom I would be willing to apply, sir."

"Then you know what follows; I shall be obliged to commit you to prison.

A low, despairing cry broke from Agnes, as again she dropped her face upon her hands.

"Take courage; some friend may voluntarily come forward to-morrow to bail you," said the squire, as he made out the mittimus.

Agnes did not speak, or look up again, but remained with her face buried in her hands until the magistrate had put the warrant in the hands of the constable, and he had touched her shoulder, saying—

"Come, young woman, the sooner you get under shelter now the better."

But again one of those failing moods came over her, and losing all her strength, she sank to the floor. At first this was treated as affectation, and the stern voice of the magistrate commanded the constable—

"Set her upon her feet and take her away! She is only acting!"

But when that officer attempted to obey, he found her white and cold, and rigid as marble. Restoratives were resorted to. Kneeling beside her, the constable rubbed her forehead, temples, and the palms of her hands with hartshorn, while the magistrate produced from his private cupboard a little good brandy, kept for just such emergencies, and forced a teaspoonful into her mouth. These powerful means at length aroused her, so that she was able to be lifted upon her feet, and conducted between the two constables to the chaise.

A very short drive took them to the prison gates.

Old Mr. Wardour was summoned, and the mittimus placed in his hands.

"And here is your prisoner," said the constable, lifting Agnes from the chaise and placing her, half dying, upon her feet.

He had to start and catch her quickly to keep her from falling.

"She has a habit of fainting," said the officer, as he half supported and half dragged her towards the door of the jail.

"Poor thing, she has one of dying, I think, to look at her; let me help her, Mr. McNab; you hurt her. One needn't be a brute, because one's a constable, need he? Come, child, cheer up! Peter and Paul were put to prison afore ever you were, and they sung hymns all night; and there's many a one as has entered these walls sorrowing, as has gone out rejoicing," said the good-hearted warden, as he gently supported the steps of the failing girl into the little office, where the preliminaries of the prisoner's reception were settled, and the constable dismissed.

"And now, my dear, I am going to put you in good company; in a cell in the upper lobby, near Father Maraudey and Mr. Dulanie. You know, my dear, that strong as circumstances was agin him, it's thought now as how he was innocent. And as for Mrs. Dulanie—she is just an angel, and if there is any created being higher than an angel, or an archangel, she is just that! She'll be a comfort to you, my dear," said the warden, as he drew the arm of Agnes within his own, and carrying a taper in his hand, supported her up the stairs and along the upper lobby.

As they passed between the row of dark and vacant cells, they saw lights gleaming from the two opposite ones at the extreme end of the lobby.

"That on the right hand is Mr. Dulanie's; that on the left is Father Maraudey's. It is rather a genteel ward this, my dear; I shall put you next door to the holy father, and right across from Mr. Dulanie's, so that you won't feel lonesome," said Mr. Wardour, unlocking the described cell and conducting his prisoner in.

It was a narrow space, well scrubbed and white-washed. A still narrower bed, with coarse clean bedding; a little stove; a stand and a chair completed the furniture.

"Now say your prayers and go to bed, like a good girl. If you have done *wrong*, ask the Lord to *forgive* you; if you *haven't*, ask Him to *deliver* you; he'll do ither. Good night, and God bless you, child," said the jailor, shutting the door, and softly turning the key.

He then took a step farther that brought him opposite to Father Maraudey's cell; he peeped through the grating and saw the old man on his knees before a crucifix.

"That's all very well," said the jailor to himself—"but it would be a heap weller if you'd only give up the name of that malefactor as Mr. Dulanie is a sufferin' for!"

Having delivered himself of this sentiment, the worthy warden crossed the lobby to Godfrey Dulanie's cell.

CHAPTER XXXI.

HONORA AND GODFREY AGAIN.

Man may despoil his brother man of all
That's great or glittering—kingdoms fall, hosts yield,
Friends fail, kin fly, and all betray, and more
Than all, the most indebted—but a heart
That loves without self-love! 'Tis here! now prove it!
BYRON.

He could not peep into this cell, for a white muslin curtain, the work of Honora's fingers, was drawn across the door, as well to keep off the idle gaze of those without, as to hide the ugly grating from the eyes of him within.

But Mr. Wardour rapped.

"Come in, good friend," said the sweet voice of the lady, as she recognized the rap of the warden. He opened the door and entered.

The cell had quite changed its aspect since the reprieve of Mr. Dulanie.

Honora had said cheerfully that since they were to go to house-keeping there, for an indefinite period, it behooved her to make the little nook habitable. With the permission of the proper authorities, who could not refuse a lady so harmless a favor, she had had the cell thoroughly cleaned and white-washed. The narrow floor was covered with a strip of Brussels carpet; a small French bedstead with a spring mattrass, fine linen and woolen coverings, and a Marseilles counterpane, was placed in one corner; an imported porcelain stove in another; a mohogany stand with toilet fixtures in a third; and an easy chair, covered with crimson cloth, nearly filled the remaining space. Little crimson merino and white muslin curtains concealed the bars of both the window and the door. On the wall opposite the bed three mahogany hanging shelves supported a choice collection of books. Each side, and also above this shelf hung sacred pictures—that on the left, the Crucifixion—that on the right, the Resurrection—that above, the Ascension.

If any caviller object that these luxuries were unbefitting the place and the occasion, let such an one remember that to Honora they were not luxuries, but habitual necessities; that they were not arranged for her own especial comfort, but for one much dearer than herself.

And besides, to obtain these comforts for him, Honora had sacrificed a personal ornament and convenience—her diamond studded gold watch—whose price had paid for the fitting up and furnishing of the cell.

By the kind sufferance of the warden, Honora now spent all her time, night as well as day, in her husband's cell.

When Mr. Wardour, in compliance with her permission, now entered, he found Mr. Dulanie seated upon the side of the bedstead, reading to Honora, who, occupying the only chair, was engaged in some delicate needlework. A spirit lamp sitting upon the toilet stand sufficiently illumined the little cell.

Mr. Dulanie immediately laid aside his book, and invited his visitor to accept the only seat he could offer him—the foot of the bed.

"I thank you, no, sir; I came only to speak to madam. There is a poor girl in the opposite cell, whom I do wish you would have the charity to look after, madam; for I don't know but she'll die all alone this night."

"Who is she?" inquired Honora, looking up from her sewing.

"Agnes Darke, the very girl as was the principal witness against your husband, although I'm here asking you to see after her, knowing as how you return good for evil."

"Agnes Darke! in the name of all that is incomprehensible, how came she hither?" exclaimed Honora, in amazement, while Mr. Dulanie looked and listened with fixed attention.

"Well ma'am, if it wasn't retribution, I don't know what else it could have been, poor thing!"

"Retribution?"

"Yes, ma'am! How came your husband here? circumstantial evidence supported by Miss Agnes Darke's testimony, and she all the while mistaken! And how comes *she* here? circumstantial evidence again, supported by Doctor Henry's testimony, and he all the while mistaken, as I'll be bound to say, for if that young lady is not innocent, then I'm not such a judge of faces as I ought to be, seeing as I've had such a long experience."

"But of what, then, is the poor girl accused?" inquired Mr. Dulanie.

"Theft, sir; grand larceny, sir; that which will send her to the State's prison for ten years, sir, if it's proved against her."

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed both Godfrey and Honora, in a breath.

"Yes, sir—yes, ma'am, that is it; the poor thing seems perfectly stupified by her condition. Ma'am, the key is on the outside of her cell; if you would take a look at her before you would retire and as soon as you rise in the morning, it would be a charity."

"I will certainly do so," said Honora.

"I thank you from my heart, dear lady, and if anything should be wanted—for I don't know but she is ill—you can rouse Tom Turner, who sleeps at the other end of this lobby, and send for me."

"I promise you," said Honora. And with this pledge the good warden departed.

After a little conversation between the husband and wife upon the subject of Agnes's arrest, Honora rapped for Tom Turner to let her out and crossed the lobby to the girl's cell. Looking through the grating, she dimly saw Agnes sitting on the side of her cot, with her hands clasped upon her knees, and her eyes wildly staring into vacancy.

Honora rapped and called softly:

"Agnes—Agnes Darke."

"Who wants me?" answered the poor girl, in a trembling voice.

"Your friend, Mrs. Dulanie—may I come in and see you?"

"As you please, lady."

Honora softly turned the key and entered, and sitting down beside Agnes, silently embraced and kissed her.

For the first time since her sudden arrest Agnes burst into tears, and dropping her head upon the lady's shoulder, wept sorely.

Honora gently soothed her with tender caresses and comforting words, until at length Agnes recovered her power of speech, and between choking sobs exclaimed:

"You—you come to me in prison, lady; you embrace me, and kiss me, and console me—ME who swore away your husband's life!"

"No, poor Agnes, you did *not*. 'God took that on Him.' My husband has been respited and will be saved and fully vindicated. I should be a heathen to believe else!"

"Ah! but then I swore away his life none the less because it was not sacrificed! Ah, lady! sweet lady! how can you endure the sight of me much less forgive me! and come to me, and caress and comfort me!"

"Because, poor Agnes, neither myself nor my honored husband can be so unjust as to blame you for that testimony, or so unfeeling as not to compassionate your present condition. Your evidence, poor girl, was given most reluctantly, as every one saw——"

"Oh, it was! indeed it was! I tried to escape the subpœna."

"We know that; we also know that your testimony was given in good faith, however mistaken it was."

"And oh, lady! do you know that since yesterday I begin to believe that I *might* have been mistaken!"

"And we *know* that you were so, dear Agnes; but what then has raised the doubt in your mind?"

"Just this, madam: my own condition. Lady, look at me! I—even I—stand committed here upon a charge of grand larceny supported by proof that must inevitably convict and send me to the State's prison, unless some miracle of Divine Providence should intervene. The testimony that convicted Mr. Dulanie was not stronger than that which will convict me; and yet I am as innocent of felony as the babe unborn! and so also, I begin to think Mr. Dulanie may well be, notwithstanding the testimony!"

"And he is, dear girl—he is! and his innocence shall yet shine forth as the sun at noon-day. But tell me, Agnes, the circumstances that led to your arrest."

"Lady, I will; but before I begin the strange, sorrowful, shameful story, it is but fair to tell you that I can bring no proof whatever of its authenticity, and that it received no credit whatever at the office of the magistrate. Therefore you must reject or receive it, lady, only upon my own assertion."

"Agnes, I have not now to learn, for the first time, that truth may lack corroborative proof, while falsehood may be supported by a mass of circumstantial evidence, as in my husband's case. Go on, child, tell me your story."

Agnes commenced and related the history of Doctor Henry's illicit love and criminal addresses to herself; her terror, loathing and rejecting of his suit; his disappointment, rage, and threats of vengeance; her departure from his house, and her arrival at the parsonage; the appearance of the police officers with the search-warrant, and the finding of the jewels in her trunk; finally, of her arrest, trial, and commitment to prison.

Honora listened with ever-increasing horror and amazement; and when Agnes had concluded her story, the lady remained in deep and silent thought.

"There, madam, there are the facts, unsustained by proof; I know not whether you can credit the statement," said the poor maiden, hesitatingly.

"Agnes—yes! at least I credit your *sincerity*. I have no doubt you fully believe what you tell me, but I know not what to make of it."

"Ah! you do not believe me!" wept Agnes.

"Yes, I do, my poor girl! that is, I believe in your innocence and truthfulness. I have never known Doctor Henry intimately enough to have any personal knowledge of his character; but for years I have known him by reputation, as a man of indubitable integrity—of unimpeachable honor! and therefore, I *hope* there may be some great error in this affair that investigation may arrest. And yet, recollecting the facts, I feel there could have been no mistake either! You could not have imagined his wicked wooing and his threats, nor could he have fancied you to have been guilty of the sins of which he has accused you. Either you or he, therefore, are *deeply guilty!* Looking in your face, dear Agnes, I *cannot* but believe in your immaculate innocence, thinking of his untarnished reputation I cannot realize his criminality. Agnes, I must have more light and better counsel upon this subject before I can give you any advice, except this—*pray*."

But instead of praying, Agnes bitterly wept.

Mrs. Dulanie gently assisted to undress the suffering girl, constrained her to lie down on the bed, and sat beside her, until anxiety succumbed to exhaustion, and Agnes slept. Then Honora softly withdrew and returned to her husband's cell.

While these events were transpiring in the prison, Doctor Heine, riding at full speed, entered the village, nor drew rein until he reached the magistrate's. But all the house was closed up and darkened.

He alighted, hurried up the steps of the portico, pulled vigorously upon the bell-handle, and then, without waiting an answer, seized the knocker and knocked loudly for admittance.

It was Mr. Jessup who put his night-capped head out of an upper window and inquired:

"Who is there, and what is wanted?"

"It is I, sir, Doctor Heine; I am here to inquire the fate of Miss Agnes Darke?"

"She has been fully committed to prison to await her trial for grand larceny," answered the magistrate.

Without a word of comment, Doctor Heine sprang into his saddle and gallopped swiftly towards the jail in the faint expectation of reaching it before the good-natured warden had retired to bed.

Vain hope! The building when he reached it was all dark and closed up for the night.

And with a sigh of disappointment the lover rode across to the village hotel, where he engaged a room for the night, which he spent in sleepless anxiety, in praying for Agnes, and in longing for the morning.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE LOVER'S CONSTANCY.

Come rest in this bosom, my own stricken deer,
Tho' the herd hath fled from thee, thy home still is here;
There still is the sky that no cloud can o'ercast,
And the heart and the home all thine own to the last.
MOORE.

Very early in the morning Ernest Heine was at the prison gate, waiting for the hour of opening.

Mr. Wardour saw him from the window of his own dwelling, and, ignorant of his relation to Agnes Darke, but thinking that he had come to see the Dulanies, hastened to admit him.

"Come in, sir, come in; your friends are up, I suppose, or if not, you can wait in the office until they are ready to receive you," as he let down bar and shoved back bolt, to open the portals for his visitor.

"I thank you," said Ernest Heine as he walked beside the jailer towards the prison, "it is not Mr. Dulanie and his amiable wife that I wish to see first, but a young creature whom you received here last night."

"Oh, yes, sir, that poor child! well just wait in the office a moment, until I go and see whether she is prepared to receive a visitor," said the warden, showing the young man into the appointed place, and starting off to do his errand.

"An instant, Mr. Wardour, if you please; it is proper, since I make this visit, to inform you that the young lady, who is to be its recipient, is my own betrothed bride. Having said this much, I need not add that she is entirely guiltless of that which is falsely and cruelly laid to her charge," said the loyal-hearted young man, as he detained the warden for a few seconds to hear this explanation.

"Really, sir, I believed her innocent from the first; and indeed people ought to be made to suffer for bringing groundless charges," said the warden, as he hastened away.

After an absence of five minutes, he returned, saying:

"You can come up now, sir. I found Mrs. Dulanie with her when I first went up, but now the lady has retired and the girl is alone; follow me, sir."

Ernest Heine obeyed, and the warden conducted him to the upper lobby and to the door of Agnes's cell, where he left him.

When he entered, he found her sitting upon the side of her cot, her head dropped upon her bosom, her hands clasped upon her lap, and her eyes fixed upon the floor.

"Agnes! dearest Agnes!"

She started up impulsively, he caught her in his arms and pressed her to his faithful heart.

"My own dear Agnes! my own deeply-injured love! how pale and faint you are! Courage, sweet girl! you shall not stay here one hour longer! Your wrongs shall all be righted! Sweet girl, look up!" said Ernest, gently caressing her.

From very faintness only, she still lay in his arms, her head drooping on his shoulder.

"Poor dove! this has almost killed you. But cheer up, my best beloved! you are not the first innocent one, by many thousands, that have been falsely accused. Cheer up, my own dear Agnes!" continued her lover, striving, by the tenderest words and gentlest caresses, to assuage her grief and restore her courage.

Still some moments longer, for very weakness, she rested in his arms and leaned upon his shoulder; then, with a feeble attempt to free herself, she faltered:

"Put me away, Ernest! See you not! the prison stain is on me, and guilty or innocent, it will cling to me, it will cleave to me, forever and forever! But you must not share the shame! put me away!"

"Agnes!" he said in a tone of gentle reproach, "I never was guilty of a dishonorable act in all my life; would you, my betrothed, be the first to counsel me to one?"

"I counsel you to save yourself, and to leave me to the fate which you cannot avert!" said the unhappy girl, with a certain gentle firmness.

"Then you counsel me to a most dishonorable course! Agnes! need I tell you that I KNOW you to be innocent?"

"Innocent? Yes! I am innocent! God knoweth that I am so!" said the orphan, clasping her hands and raising her swimming eyes to Heaven, in the earnestness of her asseveration.

"And *I* know it, Agnes, as I said before; and, knowing this, I have neither the will nor the power to leave you 'to your fate.'"

"But, alas! you would sacrifice yourself without saving me! I am doomed, Ernest; no power on earth can avert my destruction. There is evidence enough to convict me a thousand times over. Nothing but a miracle could save me!"

"Then a miracle WILL save you! Listen, Agnes: 'Innocence is the peculiar care of Providence;' trust to that alone. You will be cleared. Look at Mr. Dulanie! A miracle, almost it was, that intervened to save him!"

"But *is* he saved? Alas! he is still under sentence of death!"

"He is saved. That sentence will never be executed."

"Heaven grant it may be so," said the generous girl, almost losing sight of her own calamity in sympathy for the others.

"Amen! But, Agnes, let us now speak of yourself. Agnes, you have neither father nor mother, sister nor brother, nor even uncle, aunt, or cousin. You are a desolate and helpless orphan. You have no near friend but myself, your lover. Dear Agnes, this is no time, Heaven knows, for false delicacy, and what I wish to say is this—that you must immediately give me a husband's right to protect you!"

"Ernest, you do not mean it!" exclaimed the orphan, thrilled to the heart.

"I mean, dearest Agnes, that within this hour you must become my wife!"

"Ernest! Ernest! would you indeed thus devote yourself to a lost and wretched girl like me!"

"I would devote myself to a much injured and most innocent maiden, whom I love from the depths of my heart."

"Oh, my knight! my royal-hearted knight! would you even ruin yourself for me?" she exclaimed, trembling with mixed emotions of joy and grief, admiration and gratitude.

"There will be no ruin, dear girl. Agnes, I have faith in the Lord. I walk by faith and not by sight. Knowing you to be innocent, I feel it to be my duty as well as my inclination to stand by you. To do this blamelessly I must have a recognized right to protect you. I must become your husband, and that within this hour."

"Oh, Ernest! Ernest! almost it is worth while to be in such a desperate strait, to prove so true a friend," said the orphan, in a voice vibrating with passionate earnestness.

"'Actions speak louder than words,' and more to the purpose," he continued; "and what I have said to you in set terms, I must say to the world in more significant acts. I have told you that I know you to be innocent. In a more practical manner I must tell the world so, by making you my wife."

"Oh, Ernest! Ernest! I thank you from my heart and soul for this most noble faith! But think you I would now link my wretched lot with yours? No! Earnest, no! Do not ask me!"

"My own Agnes, I have *not* asked you. I love you. I know that you love me. We were to have been married some future day. Necessity has hastened the event. I have settled the question for us; and you, dear girl, must, in this particular, accept your fate from me," he said.

"But, oh! Ernest, I cannot! I ought not! Do not tempt me, for——"

He gathered her to his bosom, and stopped her words with kisses. Then, seating her upon the side of the cot for a moment, he drew from his pocket a slip of paper, which he laid before her, saying—

"There, Agnes! this is our marriage license. Before coming here this morning, I went and knocked up the county clerk, and procured it; for I had resolved not to present myself here without it. Wait now one moment, my love, until I speak to our friends.

And pressing a kiss upon her brow, he left her, called Tom Turner, and went to Mr. Dulanie's cell, and rapped.

To Honora's sweet-toned "Come in," he entered, and after greeting both his friends, in a few words he explained the object of his visit, and begged them to act as witnesses to his marriage.

Repressing all exhibition of surprise, and feeling an earnest admiration for the genuine magnanimity of this young man's course, Mr. and Mrs. Dulanie readily consented to do as he requested, and arose to accompany him.

All four then proceeded to the cell of Father Maraudey, who, not being a close prisoner, sat with his door ajar.

A few words informed the priest of the service required of him.

It was not for him to express surprise, curiosity, or disapprobation. So after crossing himself, he bowed his head, laid aside his breviary, arose and followed the others.

They entered the cell of Agnes. Ernest Heine gave the license to the priest, led Agnes before him, and with his strong, protecting arm clasped lovingly around her waist, held her up and supported her during the solemnization of the imposing ceremony that bound them together for life.

It was over!

Ernest Heine sealed the contract on the lips of his lovely bride.

Honora, amid tears that would not be repressed, drew Agnes to her bosom.

Godfrey Dulanie grasped the hand of Ernest Heine.

And thus, in her prison cell, Agnes Darke was made a bride!

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

ADVENTURE ON THE ICE.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

Not long since I was made glad by a visit from an old schoolmate named Albert Gould. He had spent some years in Oregon, having been engaged in school-teaching and lecturing, and was now on a visit to his friends upon the Atlantic board, with the purpose of carrying some of them back with him.

"I should hardly like to exchange all the comforts of our old home for such a wild region," remarked my wife.

"Why, bless you, it's one of the finest regions in the world," returned Gould, enthusiastically. "There's fine land, fine climate, fine rivers, great plains, great lakes, great valleys, great mountains and great forests. You can find any kind of 'doings' there, as we say at home. If you want city life, you can have it; if you want country life, you can have it; or if you want a touch of wild adventure, you can have that, too. I had one last winter that came very near lasting me for an eternity."

"Ah—an adventure? Let's have it. You've told us about your schools and your lectures, now tell us about the rest."

"Very well," my friend resumed, "I'll tell you about an adventure I had on the ice. I had just closed the fall term of my school, and had a month or two on my hands for recreation. Among my intimate friends were two old trappers—Bill Scammon and Alec Bedford. They were rough, hardy men, reared amid wilds and dangres, but honest, free-hearted and true. They were just ready to set off, with a small party, upon an expedition towards the Rocky Mountains. Would I like to go? they asked me. Of all things in the world, I should like it, and my arrangements were soon made. I asked them if we should find any ice. 'Oceans of it,' they said; so I took my skates along with my snow-shoes. I had plenty of proper clothing, and when I was rigged with my rifle, pistols, hunting-knife, and dressed in my full suit of furs, I looked as rough and trapperish as any of them.

"Our course lay along the Columbia River until we struck the Lewis branch, and then we turned to the southward. Finally we made our camp by one of the largest fields of smooth ice I ever saw. It was where the river overflowed a vast extent of low meadow, and it had frozen over since the last fall of snow. I used my skates to some purpose here, and some of the trappers joined me when not otherwise engaged.

"One afternoon, while my companions were busy in taking off some valuable furs they had trapped, I put on my skates, and determined to have a fine time all by myself. The ice was not so glare and smooth as it had been, for the day before had been warm, and a light, foggy drizzle had fallen for an hour or two, depositing upon the ice a sort of spangled frost; but this amounted to nothing then. The polished steel of my skates glided over it as though it were not there, and away I went, with the keen wind at my back.

"There was an extensive bay, making away amid islands and trees, to the south-west, which I had not explored, and I resolved to take a turn in that direction. It was some six or eight miles from the camp, and I should judge that the bay itself was ten miles deep. As I flew on, I did not realize how the wind was, and when I stopped, I was at the end of this arm of the ice-field, and all of sixteen miles from my starting-point. I was surrounded upon three sides by a heavy growth of timber, and while stopping to rest, I heard a crashing in the snow-crust not far off. I turned my attention to the point from which the sound proceeded, and in a few moments a huge grizzly bear made his appearance upon the ice, and came straight towards me.

"What could have possessed me to act as I did, I cannot tell, though I know that I felt a perfect confidence in my ability to outrun Mr. Bruin upon the slippery course. He came very near to me, and then reared himself upon his haunches. In a moment, and without any particular thought, I drew one of my pistols and fired at him, and as the ball struck him, he gave a quick howl of rage and pain, and leaped towards me. I turned and started upon the back track, with the wounded bear after me.

"It was not many minutes before I discovered that I had been acting the fool. I found that skating back towards the camp was a very different affair from skating the other way. The wind was not only in my face, but very cold and very strong. It was hard, tedious work. And I soon found, too, that the bear was gaining upon me. The frosty spangle upon the ice, while it materially retarded my progress now that I had a stiff breeze to encounter, gave my pursuer a firmer footing. He came leaping on, with a long line of blood-spots behind him, and at every bound the distance between us lessened. I made up my mind that a direct course for the camp was out of the question. I should be overtaken in a very few minutes if I kept on, and if once overtaken, that would be an end of all that was earthly of me.

"I looked at the shore, where the great trees grew upon one hand, and where the rolling grass-land swept off upon the other. Should I take that course, the bear would have me sure. The ice was my only safety. Finally the beast was close upon me, and with a quick movement I shot at a right angle from my course. Bruin flew by me, but he did not slide anywhere near so far as I had supposed he would. His long, sharp, hooked claws ground into the ice like spikes, and he stopped within six feet of where I had turned. I gained not over twenty feet by the movement, and in three minutes the beast was nearer to me than before!

"I began to think very seriously now, and so the bear must have done the same; for I had not made half a dozen turns before he comprehended my movements, and began to 'cut corners.' He had found that the frosty deposit upon the ice was of service, and upon the discovery he seemed to have based a new system of tactics. When I would turn from a direct course, instead of bracing himself for a slide, as at first, he planted both his fore feet, with a heavy blow, upon the ice, thus stopping himself almost immediately; and thus he could cut off the long corner which I had made. This was repeated twenty times, and all the while we were not over thirty feet apart, and I had not made two miles towards home. Could I have had the wind in my favor, I think I could have skated away from him; but to put before the wind now would only drive me up into the narrow bay, from which there would be no escape but to come back again.

"Over an hour had passed, and I was becoming tired. If you ever skated a long distance, with a strong wind directly in your face, you know what kind of work it is. My trip down the ice-field had given me a good exercise, and could I have taken my own time back, I should have been well fatigued at best. For a while I had a hope that I might tire the bear out, and worry him into giving up the chase; and for this purpose I cut around several small islands, and doubled all the trees I came to. But the beast was infuriate. I could see that his wound still bled, and I knew that he must suffer some pain, though perhaps only a smarting one. At all events, whether he was moved by pain, by ferocious instinct, or by hunger, or by all together, I finally became assured that he would hang upon my track while his strength lasted.

"The sun was sinking below the tree-tops, and I was yet within the deep bay. My energies had been taxed to their utmost, and my legs were failing fast. A sharp pain shot through my thighs, and my ankles ached severely. I could see that the bear was becoming tired too; but he was mad, and had more strength and 'bottom' than I had. I could hear him puff and blow, and when, every few moments, I would turn a corner, a sharp, angry growl would escape him. I must have skated many miles—more than enough, I think, to have carried me to the camp; but they lay cut out upon the ice in angles, and circles, and segments, and arcs, tied up like a snarl of yarn. I had a loaded pistol left, but I dared not stop to fire it, nor did I imagine 'twould benefit me at all if I did fire.

"In a little while the sun went down, and with it went the last of my strength. My legs were so pained and stiff that to move them was a severe effort, and my heart beat until it seemed to take away my power of breathing. I looked around for help—but none was nigh. I had asked God a hundred times; but I knew if 'twas His purpose that I should die then, my prayers would not avail me.

"At length, as the shades grew deep upon the spangled ice, I reached a small island, and turned its angle. I would have gone further, but I could not. The last atom of strength in my legs was gone, and I reeled and slipped, and lay at full length upon the snow at the edge of the hillock!

"For some seconds I lay motionless, expecting to feel the claws of the monster in my flesh. But he did not come. Finally I raised myself upon my elbow, and looked about. The bear had sunk from fatigue as well as myself. He lay upon his belly, not over ten feet distant, with his tongue protruding from between his huge teeth, and his massive flanks heaving like a pair of blacksmith's bellows. In all probability, when he saw me fall, he gave up for a resting spell, for no sooner did I get upon my elbow, than he uttered a low growl, and commenced to crawl towards me. I tried to regain my feet, but I only slipped and fell. Even to save my life I could not get up!

"I sank back upon my left elbow, and prayed again; and I did not pray in vain; for, as I became more calm, my thoughts were clearer, and I saw that my remaining pistol might, after all, be the means of my salvation. I drew it, and cocked it.

"The bear seemed to have no more power to raise himself erect than I had, for he crawled towards me with labored, painful motions, reaching out his fore feet, and fastening the crescent claws into the ice, and then dragging his huge body forward. But even at this I could not have got out of his way. I did not move—I only lay upon my left elbow, with my pistol in my right hand, and looked the beast in the eye. Finally his hot breath steamed into my face, and he raised his great paw, with its formidable points all started out, to strike me. In an instant the muzzle of my pistol was at his eye, and I fired. With a deep howl his paw dropped, and he rolled over on his side. He tore the ice awhile in his struggles, and at length settled down in the harmless quiet of death!

"I knew that my enemy was dead, and then I lay down utterly exhausted. How long I remained thus I had no means of knowing; but when I was recalled to myself, it was by hearing my name pronounced by some one close to me. I answered as well as I could, and in a moment more Alec Bedford was by my side, with a flaming torch in his hand. The rest of the trappers were soon upon the spot, and I told them in as few words as possible what had happened. Two small trees were cut down—I was braced amid the branches of one, and the bear secured upon the other, and thus myself and my game were drawn to the camp.

"It was a week before I could walk comfortably; but I had had an adventure; killed a full-grown grizzly with a pistol; and gained a bit of valuable experience—so I didn't complain."

◆

WONDERING.

BY PHŒBE CARY.

If he could know how I have walked
Across my chamber restlessly,
Counting the lonesome days and nights
As sad nuns count a rosary.

If he might look within my heart,
I wonder if his lips would move
To say, "She loveth me so well,
I cannot choose but give her love."

If he beheld the tears I shed,
I marvel if he'd whisper low,
Bending down softly as he used:
"It grieves me when you sorrow so."

But most I wonder when he'll come,
And say, with the old look and smile:
"Could you not wait and trust, beloved,
I loved you truly all the while!"

◆

CURSED WITH BLESSINGS.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"Cursed with blessings." I closed the page, and leaned back in reflection.

"Here is another paradox," said I. "Cursed with blessings! It is simply a contradiction in terms. What does the writer mean?"

I turned to the page again, and read on. "There is such a thing as being cursed with blessings, so that the earthly good a man seeks, shall become the greatest evil that can be visited upon him."

Some gleams of light passed into my mind. Thought and memory went to work; and soon around the proposition gathered a host of illustrating incidents. I remembered the case of a man who, in early and middle life, always, in family prayer, brought in the petition—"Increase our basket and store." And the worldly good things he so much desired, came; came in rich abundance. He added house to house, until his rents came flowing back upon him, a princely income. But, his selfish heart made all his earthly blessings a curse. Like the miser, his life was in his possessions; and when anything threatened these, trouble of spirit came. The dread of loss by fire, haunted him like a murderer's conscience. He insured; but felt only half protected by insurance, for there were dishonest companies, flaws in contracts, quibbles in the law. He had suffered one loss in this way. It was not serious, but enough to break his faith in Insurance as a reliable protection against fire. And so, every stroke of the alarm bell, by night or by day, gave a shock to his nerves, and sent a pang of fear to his heart. Sweet, refreshing sleep, became a stranger to his pillow. The ghost of apprehension was forever by his side, a fearful vision.

Then a morbid dread of poverty; and, after a time, his day-dreams and fitful night-visions, began to be of pauperism and the almshouse. At sixty he was insane, from this cause, and died, in the hallucination of abject want, leaving a hundred thousand dollars of property, which passed to heirs, who made the blessing a curse also, as he had done, but in another way. In five years from his death, his two sons realized their father's fears, and now fill paupers' graves.

"Cursed with blessings! Even so!" I said, as memory closed the page on which this history was recorded. "Like the manna which the children of Israel gathered in the wilderness, life's blessings must be used to-day—if hoarded selfishly, they will not keep."

Another illustration memory gave. I knew a man who set his heart upon wealth, as a means of comfort in old age. "I am willing to work now," he used to say, "while I am young and vigorous; though business is distasteful to me. I love ease and freedom, and for the sake of gaining them, I toil on in early manhood."

And while he toiled on he was comparatively happy. I can remember him as one of the most cheerful men in my circle of acquaintance. But competence rewarded his labor ere yet his sun of life had swept beyond the zenith, and his "basket and store" were full. His toil crowned with blessings. And so he retired from the busy world to enjoy these good things which had come to him in return for useful industry. Alas for my friend! He had no taste for books, no love of art, no fondness for country life, or pleasant gardening. His mind had been educated only in one direction. He was a man of business, and that alone. And so, he had nothing to do but to sit down and enjoy himself. How impossible that was, he discovered in less than a month. During the first and second season, he tried Cape May, Saratoga, Newport, and a trip down the Lakes and the St. Lawrence. But he did not really enjoy himself. How could he? There is no enjoyment for a man living without a purpose. Mere killing time is only a slow, soul-killing operation, and is always accompanied by pain.

Ten years ago it was when my friend retired from business, to enjoy his fortune. His cup of blessing was full, and he has been holding it to his lips ever since, trying to find sweetness in the draught; but, judging from the expression of his face, the tone of his voice, and the character of his remarks, I think the wine in his cup must be dashed with unusual bitterness. His blessing has become a curse.

Another received a moderate fortune from a distant relative. He happened to be heir-at-law, and the relative, dying without a will, he came most unexpectedly into possession of about thirty-five thousand dollars in cash. He was a clerk, with a salary of one thousand dollars a year, living frugally with his wife and two children in a small, rented house. Few men enjoyed life with a keener zest than this young man. But the fortune proved his ruin. The clerkship was at once given up for a business venture; the hired house for a handsome purchased dwelling; omnibus rides for drives in an elegant carriage; social tea companies for elegant parties. His course was brilliant but brief. The blessing was made a curse. Soured, dissatisfied, maddened by a sudden fall from the hight up to which he had soared, away down into the valley of abject poverty, he lost self-respect and self-control. Drink made the ruin complete. His pale widow sits toiling now early and late, striving to keep the hungry wolf from her door.

Shall we go on, varying these illustrations of the text? They may be taken from every condition in life, and from all of its wide relations. There is not a reader who cannot supply his quota, and set them even in stronger light than we have done. And there is not a reader who may not, with the writer, find in his own past history almost unnumbered instances, in which he has turned his good things into evil; his blessing into cursing. We all do it, when we let affection rest in mere natural and sensual things, instead of making these things ministers of the soul's higher life. Worldly possessions are blessings, if acquired as a means to useful ends; but they curse us, when we make them our chiefest good.

◆

REMARKS ON FAT PEOPLE.

Heretofore we have been in the practice of associating the idea of health with fatness; but recent scientific investigators view it rather in the light of an hereditary disease, handed down from parent to offspring; and it is this hereditary transmission which has made corpulence endemic in several countries. The whole Anglo-Saxon race, since the days of Erasmus, have exhibited a tendency to fatness, and there are no indications as yet of its disappearance. Among other nations, the proportion of corpulent persons is very much smaller than in England. The Irish and Scotch have comparatively few fat persons among them. The Americans are proverbially "lanky." The French and Italians are mostly lean. Generally fat displays itself to excess only in well-fed persons, who indulge in ease and luxury, just as dyspepsia and gout do. But there are many instances where fat has displayed itself without any excess of feeding. It has even been brought on, as in the case of Mary, Queen of Scots, and Napoleon Bonaparte, by confinement and grief. In most cases, however, mental anxiety or activity has a thinning effect on the human system:

"Yond' Cassius has a lean and hungry look;
He thinks too much: such men are dangerous."

The way to consume the surplus fat is to increase the quantity of oxygen inspired—in other words, to increase the quantity of active physical exercise taken. No hunter, nor hard-working artizan, nor private soldier, is ever discovered in a fat state. Constant exercise keeps down the accumulation of fuel, which idler men are punished for by being compelled continually to carry about with them. If they would rid themselves of their load, they must reduce the quantity of food taken, and increase the quantity of active exercise; it is only thus that they can bring the respiratory and nutritive processes into harmony.

◆

THE "INNER LIFE."

The familiar phrase, "They took a fancy to each other," is strictly correct. The outward appearance of two young people may be widely different; but each will have something beyond it which will attract them to each other immediately. Their inner lives, even at first sight, naturally correspond. The one sees in the other traits similar to its own, and the outer life forthwith seizes hold of the conviction, and gives it form and substance. This is the whole secret of love at first sight—also the origin of friendships—the bond between races—the intelligence that pervades the universe. Its manifestations cling to every individual as leaves do upon the trees, and its study, we are convinced, would afford a clue to the operation of all such phenomena as the divination of the ancients or the mesmerism of modern times. The inner life is the soul of the universe—the element that spiritualizes all things; and whatever name we may give it, or howsoever its separate identity may puzzle our understandings, we are always sensible that it is about and within us. Its gentlest whisperings are—

"Gems full of love, and song, and joy divine."

It is "the still, small voice," whose faintest echo is heard above the howling of tempests, the roar of battle, or the deep-throated whirl of every-day life. Knowing this, why should we be so fond of the outer temple, and so indifferent to the inner one? Have we no eye for any other beauty save what is visible to our earth-born senses?—no ear for music like that of the bird who—

"Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long!"

No longing for—

"A thousand melodies unheard before."

◆

ANNE BOLEYN.

Henry the Eighth was married to Anne Boleyn on the 25th of January, 1533, in a garret, at the western end of the palace at Whitehall. She is described as a fair young creature, so exquisitely molded in form and feature, that she enslaved the eyes and understandings of all she encountered; and such is the interest with which her memory is still invested, that numbers daily visit her chamber at Hever Castle, near Edinbridge, in Kent, and eagerly listen to the romantic traditions which point out the hill where Henry used to sound his bugle, when he came to visit her, in their happy days of courtship, from his palace at Eltham, and the exact spot in the garden, where, at the turn of a walk, she suddenly came upon the king, who was so struck with her wondrous beauty, which the confusion wrought by so unexpected a meeting greatly augmented, that from that moment he was inspired with the fatal passion which raised its unfortunate object to the throne, but to transfer her to the block. The axe with which the little neck of the cruelly sacrificed queen was severed, is still preserved in the Tower, and shares, with her grave in the chapel, the melancholy interest which, for more than three hundred years, has been associated with her name. It is said that, during the night which followed her execution, her body was secretly removed from its grave before the altar of the Tower chapel, and buried in the church of Salle, in Norfolk, where a black marble slab is shown as the covering of her remains.

◆

A GREAT BEUTIFIER.—Moonlight is a great beautifier, and especially of all that has been touched by the finger of decay, from a palace to—a woman. It softens what is harsh, renders fairer what is fair, and disposes the mind to a tender melancholy in harmony with all around.

THE USEFUL AND THE BEAUTIFUL.

The tomb of Moses is unknown; but the traveler slakes his thirst at the well of Jacob. The gorgeous palace of the wisest and wealthiest of monarchs, with the cedar, and gold, and ivory, and even the great temple of Jerusalem, hallowed by the visible glory of the Deity himself, are gone; but Solomon's reservoirs are as perfect as ever. Of the ancient architecture of the Holy City not one stone is left upon another; but the pool of Bethesda commands the pilgrim's reverence at the present day. The columns of Persepolis are smoldering into dust; but its cisterns and aqueducts remain to challenge our admiration. The golden house of Nero is a mass of ruins; but the Aqua Claudia still pours into Rome its limpid stream. The temple of the sun at Tadmor in the Wilderness has fallen, but its fountain sparkles in its rays, as when thousands of worshipers thronged its lofty colonnades. It may be that New York will share the fate of Babylon, and nothing be left to mark its site save mounds of crumbling brick-work. The Hudson will continue to flow as it does now. And if any work of art should rise over the deep ocean of time, we may well believe that it will be neither a palace nor a temple, but some vast aqueduct or reservoir; and if any name should flash through the mist of antiquity, it will probably be that of the man who in his day sought the happiness of his fellow-men rather than glory, and linked his memory to some great work of national utility or benevolence. This is the true glory which outlives all others, and shines with undying lustre from generation to generation, imparting to works something of its own immortality, and, in some degree, rescuing them from the ruin which overtakes the ordinary monuments of historical tradition or mere magnificence.

◆

A WOMAN'S OPINION OF HUSBANDS.

We know that men have, by nature, a superiority in strength, which enables them to go through labors and dangers, mental as well as bodily, from which females should be exempt, and that, by education, they are qualified for exercising the several trades or professions by which they are to maintain their families. On the other hand, women are endowed (besides the graceful amiabilities of the sex) with a great superiority of quickness, tact, and delicate discernment in all the every-day affairs of life. In all these, therefore, the husband ought to be completely guided by his wife. And this shows the wisdom of our ancestors in making the husband "endow with all his worldly goods" the wife he has chosen. The wife is dependent on the husband, and climbs to him for support, just as a hop-plant climbs on its pole, and a sweet pea on the sticks to support it, and as the vine in Italy was, according to the poets, "married to the elm." But if you could conceive a hop-pole, or a pea-stick, or an elm, imagining that those plants were put there on purpose for its adornment, you would tell them that this was quite a mistake—that the climbers are only cultivated for the flowers or fruit, and that the stakes are placed there merely for their sake, and must not claim any superior dignity or worth over the plants which they support. Now just such is the office of the husband. And this state of things is what people approach to more as they advance to civilization. Among mere savages the wife is made to yield to brute force, and is a mere drudge. In barbarian countries the women are shut up; in more civilized life they are left free, and have more control. And in dear America—the glory of all nations—they have a higher place proverbially than anywhere else.

◆

OBSERVATION AND BOOKS.

The most fruitful sources of truth and wisdom are not books, precious as they are, but experience and observation; and these belong to all conditions. It is another important consideration, that almost all labor demands intellectual activity, and is best carried on by those who invigorate their minds; so that the two interests, toil and self-culture, are friends to each other. It is mind, after all, which does the work of the world; so that the more there is of mind, the more work will be accomplished. A man, in proportion as he is intelligent, makes a given force accomplish a greater task, makes skill take the place of muscles, and with less labor gives a better product. Make men intelligent and they become inventive; they find shorter processes. Their knowledge of nature helps them to turn its laws to account, to understand the substances on which they work, and to seize on useful hints, which experience continually furnishes. It is among workmen that some of the most useful machines have been contrived.

◆

THE INCESSANT WORKER.

The great tree of life is laden with the hopes, fears, joys and sorrows of mortality. From infancy to manhood the progress is smooth and delightful. The sunshine of the moral world dances through the leaves with a gladdening radiance, and its shadows, when cast, serve only to render the returning brightness lighter still to the joyous hearts beneath its branches. The throbbing pulses of youths and maidens beat with as glad a response, and the laughter of childhood rings as cheerily, as if the whistle of that remorseless scythe were not evermore heard beneath, sweeping to their eternal rest those who, having run their course, have dropped from the tree ripe for the harvest. But he who reaps them knows no rest. Above and all around is life—busy, active, wondrous, mysterious life; below, at the end and at the beginning of all, is death—unwearied, ever-toiling death.

◆

LIFE WITHOUT LOVE.

We sometimes meet with men who seem to think that any indulgence in an affectionate feeling is weakness. They will return from a journey, and greet their families with a distant dignity, and move among their children with the cold and lofty splendor of an iceberg, surrounded by its broken fragments. There is hardly a more unnatural sight on earth than one of those families without a heart. A father had better extinguish a boy's eyes than take away his heart. Who that has experienced the joys of friendship, and values sympathy and affection, would not rather lose all that is beautiful in nature's scenery, than be robbed of the hidden treasure of his heart? Cherish, then, your heart's best affections. Indulge in the warm and gushing emotions of filial, paternal, and fraternal love.

◆

JEALOUSY.—There is more jealousy between rival wits than rival beauties, for vanity has no sex. But in both cases there must be pretensions, or there will be no jealousy. Elizabeth might have been merciful had Mary neither been beautiful nor a queen; and it is only when we ourselves have been admired by some, that we begin thoroughly to envy those who are admired by all. But the basis of this passion must be the possibility of competition; for the rich are more envied by those who have a little, than by those who have nothing; and no monarch ever heard with indifference that other monarchs were extending their dominions, except Theodore of Corsica—who had none!

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1858.

Our only terms.—Single copies, $2 per annum; two copies, $3; four copies, $6; eight copies, $12. Postmasters and others who get up clubs can afterwards add single copies at $1,50. The party who sends us $12 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free*. It will be useless for parties to write us insisting on our taking large clubs at lower rates. An elegant family paper like the Ledger, (containing no advertisements, and beautifully illustrated,) cannot be afforded at less than these terms. We always stop the paper at the expiration of the year, or the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue it, you should renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires. Terms, invariably in advance. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty-six cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage, which is half a cent a copy on every paper. The notes of all specie-paying banks taken at par. When a draft or check can conveniently be sent, it will be preferred, as it will prevent the possibility of the loss of money by mail.

All Letters containing subscriptions, or in any way relating to either the editorial or business department of the paper, must be addressed to Robert Bonner, New York Ledger office, No. 44 Ann street, New York. We will not guarantee the delivery of the paper when parties subscribe to any agent. Always send your money direct to this office, and be careful to give us the name of the Post-office, County, and State, to which you wish the paper sent.

No Travelling Agents.—We employ no travelling agents. If any party pretends hereafter to act as such you can put him down as a swindler. The best way to get our paper is at the book and periodical stores; but if you happen not to be within reach of one, then you can send us two dollars, and we will mail it to you.

Rejected Manuscripts.—We will not return rejected manuscripts.

PLEASURE-DRIVING.

We clip the following paragraph from the New York correspondence of a country paper:

"It may perhaps interest your readers to state that Mr. Bonner, the Ledger man, owns three of the finest and fastest horses in New York city. He recently paid, I understand, the enormous sum of *four thousand dollars* for a horse that can trot a mile in two minutes and thirty seconds. Some people seem to think it strange that Mr. Bonner, who is known as a quiet, sober, sedate man, should have taken such a passion for horse-flesh. The secret of the matter, I have heard it stated, is, that one of the Harpers drives a very fast horse, and Bonner made up his mind to be No. 1 on the road, as well as in the publishing business. One thing I will mention to his credit, he never bets, but drives merely for his own pleasure, and why shouldn't he, when he can afford it? The Ledger, I am told, pays him the enormous profit of two thousand dollars a week."

We copy the above, simply because it gives us an opportunity to make a few remarks. In the first place, we never paid any such price as is above stated for a horse; and, in the second place, neither of the Harpers, if we are correctly informed, now keeps a horse of the kind referred to. About three months ago, our friend, Mayor Rice of Boston, informed us that a splendid pair of horses, owned by Capt. Robbins of that city, and which had taken the first premium for matched horses at the great National Exhibition at Springfield, were for sale. We bought the horses. We found them to be all that they were represented—sound, kind, spirited, stylish, and—*fast*; yes, FAST! and we would not give one snap of our finger for them if they were not *fast!* We say this because there is a nonsensical prejudice against what are too often contemptuously called "fast horses."

We like horses of fast, quick, active movement just as we like fast, active, energetic, go-a-head men; whether it is exhibited in man or beast, we like to see *mettle!* With the spirit of betting and gambling, on races, we have no sympathy; we detest it, just as we do betting on the result of a State or Presidential election. But, say some, it is cruel to drive a horse at a high rate of speed; so it is, if you overdo the animal. But did it never occur to these well-meaning but mistaken people that a fast, well-bred horse can travel at a three-minute pace for half an hour with less labor and distress than a four-minute horse could travel for the same length of time. A man is more likely to overtask a common, slow horse than a well-bred, fast one—because the blood horse can endure infinitely more. As for ourselves, when we go out on the road, whether we go alone, or are accompanied by our "better half," or our little boys, we like to have in front of us a team of the fastest of fast horses, as we have a natural aversion to taking anybody's dust, or playing second fiddle to anybody in anything we undertake.

Upon one thing in connection with pleasure-driving on the road, all good men should frown—we refer to the practice of riding out on the Sabbath-day. Some men make this their principal day for sport; but we are pleased to know that public sentiment is daily turning against the practice. Both man and beast require one day's rest in seven, if no higher consideration were to govern us; besides, apart from its immorality, it is, to say the least, a poor way of spending the Sabbath. Let it be reformed altogether.

HASTY AND SECRET MARRIAGES.

Certain sad mistakes made by girls who have married secretly and hastily, and against the known wishes of their parents, have recently been brought to light, and provoked much discussion in regard to the facility with which mere youths and young girls can get married in New York and many other States. The truth is, we need some stringent legislation on this subject. The marrying by a clergyman or magistrate of any boy or girl, without the consent of his or her parents, should be made a misdemeanor punishable with fine or imprisonment. It is not to be supposed that young people will always act discreetly or properly in this matter, but it is to be supposed that clergymen and magistrates, *in all cases* of hasty and secret marriage in which their services are solicited, will act with prudence and deliberation. They should exact of the parties ample proof that they are twenty-one years of age, and refuse to perform the rite when such proof is not furnished. Let us have a well-digested statute upon this subject, which will do away with the present marriage-made-easy system, at least so far as boys and girls are concerned.

OUR OPINION OF IT.

What could be sillier than the marriage of the oldest girl of Victoria with the booby son of the old King of Prussia? And yet we can't take up a paper in this republican, democratic America without being nauseated by long rigmarole accounts of the wedding. We should think intelligent editors would be above such flunkeyism.—*Exchange paper.*

Why is the marriage of the Princess Royal of England with the Prince of Prussia "silly?" It strikes us as being quite the contrary. The parties love each other, are able to go to house-keeping in good style, and their parents sanction the match. What more could be asked even of royal personages? We think the expenses of the wedding were altogether overstrained; but we suppose the workmen, mechanics, merchants, jewelers, dressmakers, etc., etc., to whom the money thus expended has been paid, regard the disbursement of said funds as the most honorable and delightful part of the performance.

A New Story by Mr. Cobb will shortly be commenced in the Ledger. Mr. Cobb has bestowed an immense amount of labor upon it; and, judging from what we have read of it, it must meet with even greater favor than that with which the "Gunmaker of Moscow" or any other of his popular tales was received.

OUGHT TO BE REMEDIED.

Our readers, who are at all posted in politics, will remember how Congress last winter wasted over a hundred days in electing a Speaker. During all this time the interests of the nation were neglected, and every other consideration sacrificed to partizan ambition to secure an office, or offices, which if righteously administered, ought to be of no special benefit to any party, but rather an equal, impartial service to the whole country. An army of representatives meanwhile were living upon the public treasury, like a pack of selfish, quarrelsome beggars.

A somewhat similar scene has been presented in our State Legislature the present winter. Parties being so divided that neither could organise without aid from the others; weeks were spent in wrangling for the possession of the Speakership and Clerkship—and here, as in the case of Congress, at the sacrifice of urgent public interests, and at the people's expense. But one inference can be drawn from such events, viz., that the offices for which such bitter and shameful struggle is made, must be turned to other than honest public account. They must be keys to "pickings and stealings" for the benefit of a few—else no one would make such sacrifice for them. If a post be one of honor and distinction, it is natural that honest ambition should aspire to it; but it is evident that mere honors are not what our mercenary legislators struggle for. They are after the "plunder" which political corruption has connected with office.

We cannot believe that a majority really desire to keep up such a state of things, and if not, it is in their power to remedy it, and it ought to be remedied at once. Only let it be provided that legislators, whether State or National, can draw no money from the public purse until they have earned it by absolute organized service, and we should have no such spectacles as those we have alluded to. There is no shadow of reason why a horde of political wranglers and speculators should be paid for hindering the public welfare.

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.

Before the interchange of the poetical epistles known as Valentines was introduced, it was the practice for gentlemen to consider the first lady they saw on the morning of St. Valentine's Day as their sweetheart or valentine, to whom they were expected to make a present. These gifts are often mentioned by old writers as being the source of great expense: some are mentioned by Pepys, and others of the reign of Charles II., as consisting of jewels, etc., worth hundreds of pounds. It was usual when a party of ladies and gentlemen met on this day, to write their names on pieces of paper, which they divided into two parcels: the ladies drew for the gentlemen's names, and the gentlemen for the ladies'; those drawn together being considered as valentines. The rural tradition that on this day every bird chooses its mate is alluded to by Chaucer and many other writers, and is not left unnoticed by Shakspeare, who, in his "Midsummer Night's Dream," says:

——"St. Valentine is past—
Begin these wood birds but to couple now?"

And Herrick, in his "Hesperides," has the following:

"Oft have I heard both youth and virgins say
Birds choose their mates and couple, too, this day?
But by their flight I never can divine
When I shall couple with my valentine."

Many customs that were formerly observed have succumbed to the practice of young persons sending to their several *corresponding lovers* and acquaintances, letters adorned with caricature engravings—some loving, some satirical, nearly all nonsensical.

A FORGED "PUFF."

We have received many letters within a short time inquiring about "C. E. Todd & Co., 392 Broome street, New York," who promise to give prizes ranging from $2 to $500 to all who shall buy of them a gold pencil worth $5, and who have sent circulars over the country containing a strong "puff" of their "enterprise," which they falsely allege appeared in the New York Ledger. Some of our subscribers, supposing this forged "puff" to be a genuine commendation by us of what "C. E. Todd & Co." call their "magnificent speculation," have sent money to that firm. A short time since, one of our distant subscribers came to the city, having in his possession one of the circulars above alluded to, and called at "392 Broome street," when, to his surprise, he found that no such parties as "C. E. Todd & Co." were there, or had ever had a place of business there. He then called on us, stated his case, and showed us the circular containing the "puff" falsely alleged to have been given the missing concern by us. We at once dispatched a competent person to investigate the matter, who reported that "C. E. Todd & Co." could not be found. We make this statement in justice to ourselves and to our readers. We know nothing about "C. E. Todd & Co., 392 Broome street, New York," and have never said, and probably never shall say, anything in the Ledger commendatory of them or their "enterprise."

THERE IS CHIVALRY LEFT.

It is a common thing for the unreflecting to lament that "there is no longer any chivalry left in the world." We have always maintained that there is more chivalry in the world now than at any former period, but that as the human race has immeasurably advanced in culture and enlightenment, its chivalry is no longer expended after the fashion of Don Quixote, but is reserved for great crises. The account of the defence of Lucknow is an illustration of this fact. Where in the world's history is such another exhibition of the highest and noblest chivalry recorded? One cannot read General Inglis's modest and simple account of the siege, without tearful eyes and glowing blood and throbbing heart. Cœur de Lion's legions, nor Saladin's hosts, nor the Paladins of Charlemagne ever performed such miracles of valor or uncomplainingly endured such marvelous privations. There *is* chivalry left in the world.

MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS.

Husbands and wives should not attempt to pry too closely into each other's private affairs. Every human being has *some* thoughts, confidences, and secrets, which are sacred even from the curiosity of those with whom he is the most intimately connected, and which should never be meddled with by an uninvited hand or tongue. The temples of the soul and of the heart have their secret chambers—their holiest of holies, into which none but the Great Builder thereof himself may enter. Were this vital truth clearly understood, and its legitimate requirements obeyed, much of the strife and bitterness, domestic as well as social, now so rampant among the sons and daughters of men, would disappear. The entire philosophy and system of the thing is summed up in the blunt old phrase—"Mind your own business."

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

A TALK WITH MY READERS.

Every day I meet that man. I don't think he has any idea of the emotions he excites under my belt ribbon; and lest any profane reader should be making up his mouth to giggle, I hasten to change the expression of his countenance immediately, by announcing that the unknown is a minister. And I do this without any hesitation, though I never spoke a word to him, and know not whence he cometh nor whither he goeth; for all that I would stake my reputation, or what there is left of it, after the press have had their say, on the veracity of the above assertion.

In the first place, if he had swallowed a church steeple, and hung his hat on the top of it, he couldn't be more perpendicular. Nothing could exceed the blackness of his coat, save the whiteness of his cravat. His arms hang as limp by his side as if the empty coat-sleeves were pinned there by some surgeon who had a scientific use for what generally fills them. His feet are lifted up and put down with a precision that would delight a drill sergeant. His mouth—you should contemplate the holy pucker of it! It *smacks* of—well, how should I know? Still I may be allowed to have my little thoughts, and I have seen "frosting" cover very spicy condiments. That he deprecates a thaw I infer from the fact that he never looks at a bonnet.

Now I suppose the poor wretch thinks that the Almighty is pleased with that sort of thing. Mistaken soul, which dreams of Heaven, but never'll get there by that road! Why don't he, as a Westerner has more graphically than elegantly expressed it, "let natur' caper?" Why don't he laugh, and sneeze, and even trip sometimes, to show that he is human? and why does he walk through God's earth with the measured tread of a funeral march—crushing all the sweet flowers of life under the iron heel of repression? Faugh! I bless the Lord every day for sending us Henry Ward Beecher, who does so much with his muscular ten-strikes towards knocking over these perpendicular, ninepin-looking clergymen, and others of that sort, for whom the little children clear the sidewalk, and hush the merry laugh as they pass.

Hurrah for his jolly face, brown coat, and wide-awake hat! Thank goodness for his capability to munch pea-nuts, and scatter the shells as he goes. Bless a kind Providence that he is human, and is not ashamed of it. That he takes a particular and roguish satisfaction in saying *squished* instead of *crushed* in the pulpit; where he is not penned in like a sheep, but strideth up and down at his will, and hath a place to jump off when he is too much for himself.

It is all very well to berate him and say he is no logician, no scholar. The dexterous marksman must expect to call forth such remarks from the wincing party. We need an army of just such to clear the field of these sacerdotal conservatives, who year after year do nothing but crack dry theological nuts, out of which never a listener yet extracted nutritious meat;—who bottle up all that is human, till the effervescing contents—harmless if unrestrained, mighty and dangerous from repression—fly in their astonished faces.

"Goes too far," growls old fogyism. What was ever accomplished in this world without going too far? Better to overshoot and hit something, than never in a life-time to aim. Let temporizers stand by and watch the battle if they will not take part in it, but, in the name of the rising generation of scoffers, don't try to hinder it. Fanny Fern.

A RAINY DAY.

Rain—rain—rain. Soot and chimney-sweeps! Everything dingy and doleful—gloomy and gummy—sticky, and solemn, and sad. I shall go mad. Everybody's nose is as red as a lobster, and the mud is ankle deep. *New York* mud! Ask the laundresses what that is. One might as well dip one's petticoats in a pot of brown paint. I'll go out though, in spite of it; but how about the umbrella? for it will take both my hands, till the cramp seizes them, to hold my clothes out of the puddles; and as to walking under an umbrella held by a man! Try it once. When he is not giving you all the drippings from the points of the whalebones, he is catching those points in the ribbon on your bonnet; and when he is not doing that, he is holding it so far back that the rain drives slap in your face; and when he is not doing that, he is holding it so far down over your nose that it would take a seer to find out your latitude and longitude. Ask any woman if it isn't a gospel fact, not to mention the puddles he plants his boots in for the edification of your stockings.

Go without an umbrella. Yes, and get a stiff neck for my folly. I won't. I'll not go out at all. I'll sit with my nose flattened against the window-pane, watching those miserable gray clouds, that came on purpose to drive me— Ah, here come a batch of letters, the gods grant there may be something pleasant, for I'm just at the last-drop-in-the-bucket pinch. I'm cross enough to eat my grandmother, and she deserves it, for if it hadn't been for her I shouldn't have been here.

Let's see now. "Mrs. Robert Bonner, alias Fanny Fern." I wonder how Mr. Bonner's wife will relish that? I wonder what will be the predominant expression of Mr. Fern's physiognomy when he sees it? I wonder if a woman, whose husband is a small man, can be taken up for *big*-amy?

Here's another.

"Fanny Fern:—Madam—Please send your autograph *by return of mail*. John Stokes."

Cool, that!

And here's a manuscript which I am requested to read through, hand to Mr. Bonner, and request him to publish and pay for, as the writer wants money.

Now, if I could ensure this, I would be most happy to do so; but when an editor's acceptance of a MS. depends not upon *my* handing it to him, but upon its merit, and the kind of merit adapted to his uses; and, more than all, when that editor absolutely declines even giving a glance at any new contributions, as he is neck deep in them already, of what avail are my good wishes?

And here's another from a dear little girl whom I never saw, way off in the prairies, who wants me to write another "Play-Day Book" for her. It is written in a little crooked, childish hand; mamma evidently dotting the i's and crossing the t's. She has more sense than half the adults, for at the close she says, *I stop now because I have nothing to say.* Naive little "Fanny!" I wish the world was two-thirds children, and the other third babies. It is the grown people and the rain that put me out of tune. I should be a seraphim else. The little ones always humanize me—combed or uncombed, dirty or clean, I can always see their folded wings. Well might He "take a little child and set it in their midst." Fanny Fern.

EVERETT AND WASHINGTON.

Whatever his other chances of immortality, Edward Everett is sure, by linking his name with Washington's, through his efforts to secure "Mount Vernon" for the nation, of a grateful and perpetual remembrance. Slow and toilsome though the work be, it is perhaps the easiest method he could have adopted of ensuring his own immortality—and immortality among men is the goal to which the proudest ambitions have aspired, and to gain which they have made the greatest sacrifices. Mr. Everett's zeal in this matter might, therefore, by the uncharitable, be ascribed to selfishness. But we cannot regard it from this point of view.

Mr. Everett is already sufficiently eminent to satisfy an honest ambition. His crusade to recover, or rather to secure, the sepulchre of the "Father of his Country," is a labor of love and veneration—worthy of all patriotism and piety—for which posterity will thank him. Possible he would not have stepped forth—fearing to be intrusive, or to appear ostentatious—had he seen prospect of other means of accomplishing the end. But he saw and felt, doubtless with the shame which thousands of Americans have felt, that the Representatives of the nation would never perform this patriotic work. They might squander and plunder the public treasure for selfish purposes, but no appeal could bring them to vote the paltry sum—paltry in a national point of view—that would purchase Mount Vernon.

We think it hardly questionable that no resort but private effort remained. But is it not most shameful that this was the fact? Could a severer reproach attach to the nation's memory, than that it refused, over and over again, to possess, and decorate, and religiously preserve the tomb of Washington? We can conceive of nothing more discreditable. Not that the name and fame of Washington could be exalted thereby, for those are eternally enshrined and apotheosized in the human heart—but rather because this was a most fitting occasion and manner for the nation to pay a portion of the debt of gratitude it owes to the memory of Washington—a debt which ages of love and reverence could not altogether repay. But the occasion for the nation to redeem its honor in this matter is past, and God be thanked that there has been found one American willing and able to avert the extremity of disgrace which the Republic itself seemed willing to permit.

A PLEA FOR CHILDHOOD.

There is a habit among parents about which, although we hope it is not as prevalent amongst the readers of the Ledger as others, we feel moved to say a word. It is that of impatience towards children, because of their propensity to ask many questions which seem silly to the adult and experienced mind.

A writer, who has given evidence of a wide range of observation, and a discriminating judgment, has furnished a striking plea for childhood in this matter. He asks parents to imagine themselves in a strange country, where everything would be unknown to them, and asks them if they would not be apt to make constant inquiries of the older inhabitants, and so not only exhibit their ignorance, but do it in a way well calculated to excite the mirth of the questioned? He goes on to answer his own questions affirmatively, and to show what these adults in a strange land would do, unless they were downright dolts, as the only means of acquiring information!

What are little children but "strangers in a strange land?" Everything is new and strange to them. The range of their vision is very narrow, at first. As it gradually widens, they become actually curious—so much so that it requires a very well-informed and wide-awake parent to satisfy their curiosity. But suppose he or she fails to answer the hundred and one questions prompted by this curiosity, is the questioned justified in getting out of patience with the questioner? Surely not. Much less should the little prattler be scolded for "asking so many silly questions"—perhaps by way of covering up conscious ignorance of things which ought to have been learned by the parent, as a preparation for parentage.

As sustaining our plea for childhood, we are enabled to cite an authority no less distinguished than Mr. Locke, the well-known author of the great treatise on the "Human Understanding." He explicitly urges that, as "curiosity in children is but an appetite after knowledge, it ought to be encouraged in them, not only as a good sign, but as the great instrument Nature has provided to remove the ignorance they are born with"—without which instrument, according to his view, they would be "dull and useless creatures."

Have patience, parents, with the intensest desire to ask questions, however foolish they may seem to you, which may be shown by your little ones!

VILE!

We are astonished that our daily papers should publish such filthy trials and police reports as we find in their columns from time to time. These remarks are suggested more especially by the publication of the proceedings in the case of O'Connell, who was lately tried for murdering a woman in Greenwich street. How any father or mother can allow papers containing these vile reports to be introduced into their families, where their children can get hold of them, is more than we can account for. If we published a daily paper, we think we could manage to give the public all the *news* that they require in such cases without publishing the indecencies; but the misfortune is that the editors of our daily papers greatly err in thinking that this sort of stuff *sells* well, and hence they rival each other in trying to see who can get not only the *fullest* but the *richest* report.

The New York Express states that a paper circulating among the Republican members of the Legislature of our State to procure their signatures, is said to be urging Thurlow Weed again to resume his former position with the Albany Evening Journal.

It is no wonder that the Albany Evening Journal's own party is getting disgusted with it, for we have never read a more dirty, scurrilous and abusive sheet than it has been during the past year. If the Republicans cannot adopt some plan to improve it, they should, for the sake of their party, start a new paper, andplace some able and respectable men at the head of it.

A KNOTTY QUESTION.

"Can a man commit suicide in his own lifetime?" was a question recently started among a group of "counsellors learned in the law," in one of our courts. At the first thought one would be apt to answer, "Yes, *of course* he can;" but there is much to be said, and much was said on the occasion referred to, for the other side. In fact, one eminent lawyer convinced several of his hearers that a man *cannot* commit suicide in his own lifetime, and staggered his opponents by his ingenious arguments.

Honesty is informed that we have paid for the tale to which he refers, so that his impertinence is uncalled for.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

We cannot well attach too much value to a competency or too little to a superfluity, but we err in generally defining the former as a little more than we already possess. Riches provide an antidote to their bane, for, although they encourage idleness, they will purchase occupation by change of scene, variety of company, and that noblest of employments—the exercise of beneficence. Robinson Cruso might despise riches, and so may a savage; but no sane and civilized man will.

Retirement from business is a mistake in those who have not an occupation to retire *to* as well as *from*. Men are never so happily employed as when they are following the avocation which use has made a second nature to them. The retired butcher must have found idleness hard work when he gave notice to his friends that he should kill a lamb every Thursday by way of amusement.

Almost every man numbers among his acquaintances one man, at least, who reminds him of the histrionic enthusiast in one of Dickens' novels—the fellow, we mean, who entered so thoroughly into the character of Othello, that, being about to personate it, he was not content to give his face a Moorish tinge, but must needs black himself all over.

Anybody may paint a tree or a cloud, but it is only the artist who can give us the heaven beyond the one, or set the breezes playing with the other. The novice can show the silver skeins of streamlets down the mountain side, but it is the "old master's" hand can set those brooks to flowing, and hold the shadows anchored as they glide.

Our sensibilities may be too weak as well as too strong. They who feel little for themselves will feel little or not at all for others. Nothing can be more different than fortitude and insensibility, the one being a noble principle, the other a mere negation; and yet they are often confounded.

Common revenge is a momentary triumph, the satisfaction of which dies at once, and is succeeded by remorse; whereas forgiveness, which is the noblest of all revenges, entails a perpetual pleasure. It was well said by a wise Roman emperor, that he wished to put an end to all his enemies by converting them into friends.

A correspondent of a Newbern paper says that he recently thought he saw a coach with several passengers, but found it to be an optical illusion. We think rather that it must have been the ghost of a mail-stage carrying dead letters and dead heads.

Captain Marryat expressed the opinion in his book of American Travels, that a British army of thirty thousand men could walk from one end of our Union to the other. We guess they would frequently "break," like some trotting horses, into a *run*.

"What shall we name our little boy?" said a young wife to her husband. "Call him Peter." "Oh no, I never knew anybody named Peter that could earn his salt." "Well, call him Salt Peter, then."

We know of a ruffianly editor who is said to keep five armed slaves every night in his house as a body-guard. It is no doubt appropriate enough that a blackguard should be defended by black guards.

An Eastern paper says "there is a bank in the West with a capital stock of coon skins." There is a bank at the East with a capital stock of codfish. It is the bank of Newfoundland.

Reynolds, the dramatist, observing to Martin the thinness of the house at one of his plays, added he supposed it was owing to the war. "No," replied Martin, "I should judge it is owing to the *piece*."

"I say, Pat, what are you about—sweeping out that room?" "No," answered Pat, "I am sweeping out the dirt, and leaving the room."

A Mr. Pea has been indicted in Ohio for whipping his wife and children. No doubt he thinks it a hard case that a man can't be allowed to thrash his own *Peas*.

Why can't the captain of a vessel keep a memorandum of the weight of his anchor, instead of weighing it every time he leaves port?

There is a purple half to the grape, a mellow and crimson half to the peach, a sunny half to the globe, and a better half to man.

Few people thank you for praising the qualities they really possess. To win their hearts, you must eulogize those qualities in which they are deficient.

Proselytism is often self-love, seeking to make converts to our own opinion, disguised as the love of God, seeking to win votaries to the true faith.

The man who courted an investigation says it isn't half as good as an affectionate girl. We presume not.

A sensible writer puts his strength into his arguments. A silly one puts his into his epithets.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A member of the *Academie des Sciences*, of Paris, who is also an eminent chemist, has invented an apparatus which, he thinks, will enable human beings to breathe as freely at the bottom of the sea as on the surface of the earth. He proposes to form an association for collecting all the treasures now lying at the bottom of the ocean, and estimates at about four thousand millions of dollars ($4,000,000,000) the harvest of treasure to be gleaned on the route between England and India only; while the entire amount of money, jewels, and other valuables, "lying around loose" at the bottom of the ocean, is supposed to equal the incomprehensible sum of fifteen thousand millions of dollars—$15,000,000,000.

A frightful earthquake, or rather a series of earthquakes, occurred a short time since in the kingdom of Naples, the shocks and throes of which extended over a district comprising nearly a hundred towns and villages, some eighty of which have suffered more or less from the disaster. The houses were prostrated, the earth opened in horrid fissures, sending forth deafening detonations, belching fiery and poisonous gases, and paralyzing the people with terror. Over fifteen thousand lives were lost, and some estimate the number as high as forty thousand.

A duel was recently fought at the Chippewa Agency, in Minnesota, between a white man and the famous Chippewa chief, Hole-in-the-Day. The white man was wounded in the right side at the first fire, and in the left side at the second. The Indian insisted on firing again, although his opponent could with difficulty stand upright; and when the smoke of the third fire cleared away, the vindictive Hole-in-the-Day was found lying dead with a hole in his heart.

The female thieves of this city have adopted a new plan for robbing their victims. They accost a man in the street late in the evening, ask him to see them safe home, throw their arms blandishingly around his neck, in the confusion of the moment rob him of his watch or purse, and sometimes of both, and then gaily bidding him good night on his refusal to go with them, hasten out of sight before he discovers his loss.

Many complaints are made in all parts of the country against the "gift stores," "gift publications," and other like swindling concerns, the proprietors of which are practicing extensively on the credulity of the unsophisticated. To all who have sought our advice in regard to these concerns, we say: Have nothing to do with them; they are all shaky and uncertain.

A farmer in the western part of Pennsylvania, was in the habit of cruelly ill-treating his horse. A short time ago the animal, being at liberty, rushed on him, threw him down, trampled on him, and bit him severely. He uttered loud cries, but it was some time before they were heard, and when, at length, some persons went to his assistance, he was quite dead.

Miss Mary Jane Cribbet, of Cincinnati, recently recovered, in a suit for breach of promise of marriage against a faithless lover, the sum of ten thousand dollars. Juries, in these cases, in all parts of the country, seem determined to give the injured party liberal damages, and young men and old men had better be careful how they break a solemn engagement to marry.

An English maiden lady died recently in this city, when it was ascertained that at the time of her decease she had the enormous number of *three hundred and fifty dresses!* principally silks and satins of the best quality. Three hundred of the dresses were made up, and fifty of them were still in the piece.

A little boy, five years old, named Edward Runge, living in Fulton Avenue, Brooklyn, was playing about the kitchen a few days since while the servant was washing, and tumbled into a tub of hot water, which scalded him so terribly that the flesh peeled from his face and arms.

In Keokuk, Iowa, a fisherman recently caught a catfish, from whose stomach he emptied an elegant gold chronometer, and a gentleman in that city recognized the instrument as one he lost overboard from a steamer last summer. "We tell the tale as to us 'twas told."

During the year 1857 over six hundred millions of steel pens were manufactured.

SONG.

BY ALICE CARY.

Low, sweet and low,
Sing to the shore, oh, Sea!
And softly, softly, west wind, blow
My lover's love to me;
Blow and fill my heart with bliss
As full as it can be.

Light, low and light,
Let your whisper, west wind, be,
And tell me whether he sleeps to-night
By the window nearest me!
For if he loves me as I love him,
'Tis there his bed will be.

Creep, west wind, creep
Under the sheets, and see
Whether or not his arms in sleep
Are reaching out for me!
For if the love of my love is mine,
'Tis thus his arms will be.

About his pillow flit,
And see if you will see
A name in love's red letters writ
On his cheek, then fly to me,
For I know if a name is written there,
Whose name the name must be!

RICHARD HOFFMAN;

OR,

THE PEASANT AND THE NOBLEMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER XVIII.

UNCLE SILEX GIVES JACK A CHARACTER.

That same night Jack made his bed close to the door of Lilly's room, arranging it in such a way that it would be impossible for any one to enter without disturbing him. With all his shrewdness, the importance of the threatening words he had so incautiously let drop, and the effect they were likely to produce upon Mike, never once occurred to him. He had not the slightest suspicion of any danger to himself—a good thrashing, perhaps, a quarrel or two, but nothing more.

For hours the poor boy lay awake, revolving in his mind various schemes for the protection of Lillian. Had he been older, or could he have procured work, he would have taken her from the cottage, and provided for her himself. He had no friend to consult, no one to advise, or give him a character. It is astonishing how the desire of obtaining one haunted him.

"Pity Lilly ain't a boy," he repeated to himself. "We could run away together—somebody might give us work; but then she ain't fit for work, her hands are so white and pretty."

Sometimes he thought of taking a lodging for her in some distant part of the town, passing her as his sister, and supporting her by his old trade of pocket-picking; but an invincible repugnance, the dawning of a better feeling in his young heart, caused him to dismiss the scheme from his mind; something, he felt sure, would turn up that was better, he could not tell exactly what, but with the natural hopefulness of youth, he could not believe that life's lottery was composed entirely of blanks.

These reflections kept him awake till a late, or rather an early hour, at which his respectable relative returned. Jack hastened down as usual, the instant he heard his signal at the door to let him in, and thanked goodness that he was sober, little imagining that he was all the more dangerous on that very account.

"Have you been out?" inquired Mike, in a tone of voice unusually kind.

"No, uncle."

"That's right. I don't like the place to be left alone while that gal is in it. She might run away."

"You're enough to frighten her away," observed the boy.

"It was along of the drink, Jack," replied the ruffian. "I ain't *naturally* spiteful, as you know, but the drink maddens me, and you made me worse."

"I!"

"You; wasn't it aggravation to see that you was fonder of Lilly than your poor old uncle who brought you up?"

Jack remained silent; he did not exactly know what to make of Mike's sudden sensibility.

"But I ain't a-goin' to reproach you since you told me the truth," added the convict.

"You have seen your brother, then?" exclaimed the boy.

"Why, no, I can't say that I have *seen* him, but I have discovered quite enough to know that it was all true. He is off to Chatham."

"St. Faith's, you mean," observed his nephew.

"No, Chatham. I am quite right; his master has got a fine house there, but we will ferret him out in the morning."

"I don't want to ferret him out," said the lad. "I've seen quite enough of him."

"But *I do*," continued Mike. "He is a bad 'un. I'm sorry to say so of my own born twin brother, but he is a natural bad 'un. Do you know why he keeps out of the way, and wants to hide from us?"

"Because you have been a thief," answered Jack. "He told me so."

"Nothink of the kind. It's because he has robbed us. There's money in the family. You've heard me say so before, ain't yer?"

"Oh, but I never believed it, for you never talked about it unless you wor drunk."

"A proof that it was true. Men don't lie when they are in licker, Jack."

"Don't they, uncle?"

"No; the real *feelin'* comes out then; but we'll talk more about it in the *mornin'*. The old fox has taken to his earth, but we'll smoke him out, as sure as my name's Mike. Good night."

"Good night, uncle."

"Give us yer hand. I bears ye no malice."

The lad gave it him. He was not naturally of a resentful nature, and had been too long accustomed to the outbreaks of temper and fits of drunken passion on the part of his relative, to pay much attention to any words they might have had. He even forgave, or at least forgot, the blows he had received.

"He is not such a bad fellow, after all," he thought, "for he did take care of me when I was a kid. I might have starved but for him."

Little did he suspect the reasons the ruffian had received for doing so; that his father had consigned to his worthy brother-in-law the proceeds of a most important robbery when the latter visited him in Newgate, on the sole condition of protecting his son, and, strange to add, of bringing him up honestly.

We have seen how he fulfilled his trust.

In the morning, as usual, Jack was the first down to light the fire, and sweep up the place. Lillian followed; her face was exceedingly pale, and her eyes red with weeping. On seeing her protector, she ran and threw her arms round him, and asked if he was hurt.

"Not a bit," answered the lad. "Bless you, I could stand twice as much thrashing as that; but it won't happen again. Mike was drunk."

The child shuddered at the name.

"I tell you it won't, Lillian," whispered the boy; "and what's more, I won't leave you—you won't be afraid whilst I stay by you."

"O, no!" exclaimed the helpless creature, joyfully; "but he may want to send you out again, and then——"

"And if he does, I won't go," interrupted her defender, boldly. "Lillian," he added, "will you say over the prayer as you did yesterday morning to me, and I'll try and repeat it after you? I don't quite understand it all yet, but I do some of it, and I feel as if it did me good."

Again the divine and simple words were repeated by them on their knees; and He, whose divine lips first pronounced them, who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," doubtless heard and sanctified them. During the morning Mike informed his nephew of a plan he had laid to obtain an interview with his brother, and bringing him to some arrangement respecting what he called his rights; for which purpose he proposed that they should *both* proceed as far as Chatham, and take up a position at the public-house directly opposite the mansion of Sir Norman Boothroyd.

The boy listened to him without the slightest suspicion, and had only one objection to urge:—"What was to become of Lilly?"

"Leave her at home," was the answer; "she'll be safe enough till we come back."

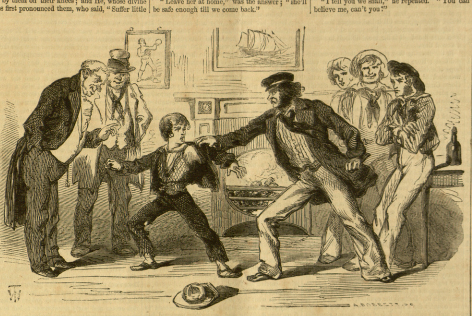
Jack did not much like the idea of her remaining in the cottage by herself. "Yet, better alone," he thought, "than with his uncle; besides, it would only be for a few hours;" so he consented.

Although it was not his day for getting shaved, the old convict underwent that operation, and took unusual pains with his dress; evidently he wished to appear as respectable as possible. Jack, too, was desired to put on his best.

"We shall come back *together*, Lilly," whispered the lad, as he bade his *protege* good-bye.

The child looked at him mournfully.

"I tell you we shall," he repeated. "You can believe me, can't you?"



JACK MANDERS FINDS HIMSELF IN UNANTICIPATED DIFFICULTIES.

A very faint "yes" spoke, not her doubt of Jack's word, but her own misgivings.

Mike told her she might do anything she liked to amuse herself, provided she kept away from the window, which Lillian promised to do. Her jailer said nothing about the door that he intended to lock after him, and did so on quitting the house with his nephew.

At London Bridge they both took the steamer for Chatham. It was the first time Jack had ever been on the river. Despite the cold, he remained on deck all the way, and enjoyed the trip exceedingly. Amongst the passengers were several sailors, and a boy about his own age, belonging to a ship bound for China, which was to sail with the next tide. At first these rough sons of Neptune inclined to amuse themselves with the young landsman's simplicity; but they soon discovered that, although he had never been to sea, he was not such a greenhorn as they took him for, but possessed a wit as sharp and ready as their own.

"Are you many on board a ship?" inquired Jack.

"About thirty hands, the two mates, and the skipper," was the reply.

The boy whispered in the ear of the inquirer that skipper was the name for the captain.

"And I suppose you're very merry?"

"Merry! Lord love your young heart," exclaimed an old, weather-beaten tar; "it's the happiest life going—all play and no work; its G. G.—grub and grog with us all day long. Then, at night, when the stars are shining ten times brighter than they do on land, and the ship keeps her course steadily—the men on the watch sit together, spin yarns, and sing such songs, that I've known the dolphins and mermaids follow in our wake for miles to listen to 'em."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Jack, with unfeigned simplicity. "I thought sailors had something else to do than to spin yarn, or cotton either."

This observation was received with shouts of laughter.

"I see you are making fun of me," he added. "I believe about the mermaids, because I've seen picters on 'em; but spinning yarn won't do."

Little did he imagine how very soon he would understand what spinning a yarn meant.

During the voyage he got quite friendly with his new companions, especially the boy with whom he exchanged pocket knives in token of good will.

The steamer reached the pier at last, and Mike made his appearance on deck. Not seeing his nephew, he called out his name rather sharply.

"Here," replied the lad.

The old sailor who had been amusing himself at his expense, eyed the ex-convict sharply, and then gave a low whistle.

"Is that your skipper?" he said.

"That's my uncle," answered Jack.

"Don't like his figure-head. Should be sorry to sail under his orders. Take my advice, youngster, unship yourself as soon as you can."

"What do you mean by unshipping myself?"

"Cut and run," replied the lad he had changed knives with, laughingly. "I wish you were going with us," he added. "And yet I doubt, for, after all, it is a hard life, especially when you have a bad captain."

"And have you a bad captain?" inquired Jack.

"Hush," said the boy.

Mike and his nephew landed, and the former taking the lead, directed his steps to a public-house facing the river at the extreme end of the town. It appeared rather a low neighborhood, even when measured by his companion's standard of respectability, which was far from being a very unreasonable one.

"Are you going to 'The Blue Peter?'" he inquired.

The old man nodded in the affirmative.

"Why, surely, you don't expect to find Uncle Andrew there?"

"It's a capital place to look out for him from," replied the convict. "You see that road opposite? That is the one he will come by."

"Are you sure, uncle?"

"Certain; it leads to his master's place."

All this appeared so very plausible that the boy believed it without the slightest hesitation, and followed his relative into "The Blue Peter." Mike called for a glass of his favorite beverage, gin-and-water, and directed his nephew to watch at the window whilst he sat drinking it. Jack's eyes became riveted on the road opposite, like those of a staunch terrier watching the hole by which the rat is expected to emerge.

He had been at his post about ten minutes when his attention was disturbed by several persons entering the room. He turned round, and to his astonishment beheld *both* his uncles and three or four sailors. A secret misgiving crept over him.

"Well, Jack," said Mr. Silex, showing his peculiar teeth, "you want a character. I have come all the way to Chatham to give you one. Very kind, isn't it?"

"I know your kindness," answered the boy, bitterly, at the same time trying to pass from the room.

"Hollo! where are you scudding to?" demanded one of the sailors, a stout, powerful man, about forty, dressed in a pilot coat, and a gold band round his sealskin cap.

"What is that to you?" replied Jack, endeavoring to pass him.

"What is it to me, you young grampus?" repeated the man, at the same time laying a grasp like a smith's vice upon his shoulder. "I'll soon teach you what it is to me."

"Is that the way you answer your captain?" said Mike, with a broad grin of triumph on his countenance.

"He ain't no captain of mine," exclaimed Jack, indignantly.

"You are wrong, my *dear boy*," mildly observed the steward, "very wrong, and let me add, ungrateful as well, after the expense we have been at to apprentice you to him; you have more than once," he added, "asked me for a character. Before going on board your vessel, you shall hear the one I will give you."

The features of the poor lad, who still remained in the iron, vice-like grasp of his captor, turned deadly pale. He perfectly understood every point in the mocking speech of his relative, and knew the sort of character he had to expect.

"In the first place," said Mr. Silex, "*he is a thief.* It is to prevent his disgracing his family and friends that we send him to sea."

"A pickpocket," added Mike, trying to look very much shocked at the idea of any one belonging to him falling into such a vulgar vice.

"An impudent, prying, meddling, troublesome rascal," continued the former speaker, bitterly, "who has cost me more than I like to think of."

"Who requires a strong hand," chimed in his brother.

"He has found one," replied the captain, shaking his prisoner roughly. "Only let me catch him picking pockets or anything else on board the Caradock, that's all."

"He will require great severity," charitably observed the respectable Mr. Andrew, "to break him in. I should say very great severity."

"*A little thrashing will be quite lost on him*," said Mike.

"You hear what your good uncles say of you."

Jack gazed upon them both for an instant, with a look of intense hatred, and dashed aside a tear before he found heart to speak.

"I do," he said. "If I am a thief, that man," pointing to Mike, "taught me to become one—lived upon what I brought him home. He has been transported himself, and will live to be hanged if ever I get back, or his precious brother *doesn't murder him*. Perhaps," he added, "they will murder each other, for they can't trust each other. They know too much."

The two brothers, as if to give the lie to their nephew's assertion, smiled affectionately, and shook each other by the hand.

Jack, despite the unpleasant position in which he found himself, could not refrain from breaking into a hearty laugh.

"Uncle Andrew," he said, "Mike's a 'cute hand at poison. Ask Fiddler Dick if he isn't. He can tell you all about it."

The convict trembled, and half repented of the step he had taken.

"Mike," continued the boy, "look out if ever uncle Andrew gets them long, bony fingers of his near your throat. I've had 'em close to mine."

Captain Gall—that was the name of the commander of the Caradock—considered that he had never heard such a hardened young reprobate in all his life, and handing Jack over to two of his men, directed them to take him on board, and keep him under hatches till the ship was out of the river.

As the boy was led or rather dragged out of "The Blue Peter," Mike drew the knotted cord, with which he had menaced Lillian, from his pocket, and shook it triumphantly in the air. Half maddened at the sight, his nephew struggled violently till felled senseless by a blow from the brute who was henceforth to be the master of his destiny. In this state he was conveyed unresistingly on board, and placed under hatches.

When he came to, he found that he was surrounded by the acquaintances he had made on board the steamer, and the words of the boy flashed upon his memory, and he repeated to himself—"*Not when you have a bad captain!*"

"Cheer up my lad!" exclaimed the sailor who had amused himself and his companions with Jack's inexperience. "Why is he brought on board?"

"New apprentice," replied one of the men.

The old mariner turned his quid, and muttered, "A bad skipper! I told him so. Advised him to cut and run; but he wouldn't take the warnin'. Never was deceived yet. Can always tell what the ship is from the figure-head."

"His uncle says he is a thief," said one of the sailors who had brought him on board the vessel.

"Don't believe it!" cried several of the men. "The old rascal whom we saw with him on board the river craft looked decidedly more like a thief than he does."

"Nor I," said the boy who had exchanged knives with Jack; "and if he is, I dare say it was ill-usage that made him one."

Further comments were cut short by the return of Captain Gall on board, when every man flew to his post, for they knew the tyrant they had to deal with. In a few hours the tide began to rise, and the vessel moved slowly down the river.

Before concluding our chapter, it is quite necessary that we should explain to our readers not only the presence of the two brothers at Chatham, but how they came to be acting in concert against their nephew.

A sense of mutual danger had united them. Jack's discovery of Andrew Silex's whereabouts and the name of Lady Boothroyd threatened to derange the deep-laid plans he had cleverly concocted—not for her ladyship's advantage, but his own. He had even brought himself to part with no inconsiderable portion of that which he prized most on earth—his money—to effect the removal of his nephew.

Mike's hostility to the boy arose from a yet stronger motive. Our readers have not forgotten the threat he so imprudently let escape him.

"Well," said the steward, with a sigh, as soon as the captain had taken his leave, and he and his brother remained alone, "it will be some time before I recover that loss—a hundred pounds!"

"You can afford it."

"Can I?" muttered the old man, sharply.

"Yes! Her ladyship must pay it all. It's too late, Andrew, now," added the convict, "to put the blinkers on me. I know all."

"Do you!" said Mr. Silex. "By-the-bye," he added, wishing to direct the conversation into another channel, "what did Jack mean by poison and Fiddler Dick?"

"How should I know?" muttered Mike, impatiently. "Perhaps you can tell me what he meant by cautioning me against your long, bony fingers?"

"Not the slightest idea," replied the steward. "Most likely it was merely a scheme to set us by the ears."

"That's it," exclaimed Mike; "but we ain't such fools."

"I should hope not," observed the former, with an amiable smile, which displayed his very peculiar teeth. "Are we not brothers?"

"Of course we are," replied the convict; "*twins.* Your interest is my interest, and my interest is yours. This is a '*appy* meetin'. My 'art quite overflows with joy. We shall 'ave no disputes, no *unpleasantnesses* now; but, harm-in-harm, walk through life together."

Mr. Silex mentally winced at the idea of this; but was far too politic to show his distaste. The two worthies once more shook hands, and then returned to town together.

CHAPTER XIX.

MARK RAYNER SPECULATES IN PASSAGE TICKETS.

Mark Rayner and his wife bitterly felt all the miseries of humble life in London, as they sat day after day in their close, smoky lodging in the city. They missed the kind, familiar faces of St. Faith's—faces they had known from childhood—the neighborly word, the cheering smile, the heart's intercourse which tell us we are not quite isolated in the world, that beings like ourselves take an interest in our welfare. Their departure for America had been delayed by the repeated but fruitless attempts which Rose had made to obtain an interview with Lady Boothroyd, in order to remind her of her broken promise, of restoring the fatal proofs in her possession. The haughty woman had refused to see her; sent down angry messages to the suppliant, as she stood trembling and anxious at her door. More than once, threats had been added, covert ones indeed, but sufficiently intelligible to alarm the fears of a wife.

The fifty pounds, too—the price of Lillian's abduction—all they now possessed in the world, began to diminish rapidly.

The unhappy pair, one, at least, of whom, deserved a better fate, were seated at their solitary breakfast, at "The Half Moon," near Farringdon-street; neither had any great inclination for food, but they had been *compelled* to order it, to avoid the surly looks of their landlord, who had more than once observed to them that letting beds alone wouldn't pay his rent.

Mark was reading the paper.

"Here is something," he suddenly exclaimed, handing it to his wife, "that may suit our purpose."

She read as follows:—

"Passage to America.—In consequence of a severe domestic affliction, two berths are to be disposed of at a very considerable reduction, on board the fast-sailing clipper the Syren, now lying in the docks at Liverpool, to take in cargo; to start on the first of the ensuing month. Apply to Mr. B——, No. 10 Reynold's-place, Tottenham-court-road."

"You will wait no longer then?" observed Rose.

"Not an hour," replied her husband, gloomily; "my heart is gnawed with impatience; besides, why should we linger in this wretched place in the hope of obtaining justice or pity from Lady Boothroyd?—as well attempt to draw milk from an adder—we have served her purpose; she has no further use for us; and, with that fatal proof in her possession, may defy all we can do, or threaten."

"Yes, yes!" observed his wife, nervously. "Better leave England at once. I should do so with a lighter heart if I could only ascertain the fate of the child. It is a bitter reproach to me."

Mark hid his face in his hands; he had terrible misgivings on the subject.

"Surely," added the speaker, "her ladyship can never intend any harm to her."

"No fear of that," muttered the guilty man, giving utterance to an assurance he was far from feeling. "It is poor old Simon and Hester I am thinking of—what they must suffer; the doubt, the fear. It is horrible; and to think that I should be the cause of all their misery! I, whom they have known from boyhood. Should the truth ever become known, how those who once respected will despise me! As for any harm coming to the child, I have no dread of that. Why should Lady Boothroyd harm the daughter of Barny Gee? No, no; it is her pride, nothing more—or rather Sir Norman's. He can't endure that the orphan of the man he caused to be murdered should remain at St. Faith's to keep up bad recollections by her presence. In a wordly point of view, Lillian will not suffer by the change, rely upon it."

"If I could only think so!" sighed his wife.

"At any rate, we are powerless to help her," added the man.

The opportunity of obtaining their passage to America at a reduced price was too important with their slender means to be lost sight of, so the speakers started at once to the address indicated in the advertisement, and were shown into a room where an old, gray-haired man and a young woman were seated. Both were in deep mourning—the latter in widow's weeds.

A Bible, with a pair of spectacles upon the open page, was lying on the table.

There was such an air of respectability and subdued sorrow in the appearance of the parties, that Rose felt quite interested.

"Be seated," said the man, pointing to chairs. "I presume that you have called respecting the advertisement."

"We have, sir."

"You are aware that the Syren sails on the first of the month?—only three days."

"Quite aware of it, sir."

The gentleman drew from a large black leather pocket-book, not unlike a sermon case, the two tickets, printed in the usual form, and signed by the agent at Liverpool, and handed them to Mark Rayner.

"You see," he said, "that thirty pounds have been paid for the two?"

The sum was marked on them.

"They were taken," continued the old man, "for my poor boy and his wife, but——"

Here his voice faltered, and the woman in the widow's weeds raised her handkerchief to her face to hide her tears.

"Well, well, my love," said her father-in-law, "it is a severe trial, but it is our duty to submit. Providence tempers the wind to the shorn lamb. Here," he added, placing his hand upon the sacred volume on the table, "here is our consolation."

Mark and his wife began to feel quite interested.

"I see, sir, you are a clergyman," observed the former.

"A poor curate," answered the vender of the two berths, meekly; "a humble laborer in the vineyard of—of—the——"

Here a violent fit of coughing interrupted the speaker for some seconds. When he recovered, he observed that it had pleased Heaven to afflict him for many years with a severe asthma, which compelled him to smoke even at that early hour of the day.

"Doubtless," he added, "you perceived the odor of the pipe when you entered the room."

Mark had noticed it, and his wife imagined, but it might have been fancy, that she could detect the smell of gin with it.

The purchase-money, twenty pounds—for they were first-class berths—was soon settled upon, the money counted down, and the tickets transferred. It was a large sum, considering their present means, but Mark Rayner could not endure the thought of Rose being exposed to the privations and inconveniences of a steerage passage.

"It is a sad thing to quit your native land," said the old gentleman, as he placed the notes in his large black pocket-book. "But in America you will scarcely feel yourselves among strangers, you will hear your own language, and find more than one faithful ministry there. May you be prosperous."

"Thank you, sir," replied the intended emigrants.

"I will pray for you," added the curate.

There was something so venerable in his appearance, so touching in the tone of his voice, that his visitors felt quite affected, and parted from him reluctantly, after thanking him again and again for the kind interest he had expressed in their welfare.

"A good man," observed Rose to her husband, as they quitted the house; "so pious and simple."

"Very," replied Mark.

"What a pity he suffers so from asthma."

"A great pity."

That same day the unsuspicious pair made several purchases of things necessary for the voyage, and started by the early morning train for Liverpool, and on their arrival proceeded at once to the vessel which was lying in the docks, in order to avoid the expense of another tavern bill. Mark was busy arranging the luggage when the captain made his appearance, a hearty, bluff-speaking man.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed, "what are you doing here?"

"Stowing my things in our berths," answered Mark.

"Hadn't you better have secured them first?" asked the commander of the Syren.

"If you please, sir," said Rose, "we have secured them, and paid for them in London.

"Of the agent?" demanded the captain, whilst Mark was fumbling in his pocket for the documents.

"No, sir; of the Reverend Obadiah Cheeseman."

"Whom!"

"The Reverend Obadiah Cheeseman. He had taken them for his son and daughter-in-law, but the young man died, and——"

"There are the tickets, captain," said Mark, placing them in his hand.

The rough sailor uttered an exclamation which, no doubt, would very much have shocked the pious gentleman with the asthma who had sold them, could he have heard it.

"The infernal old rascal!" he added, after indulging in a string of expressions something stronger than mere expletives; "this is the third time he has tried it on."

"Tried what on, sir?" inquired the husband of Rose, looking up from his work, and seating himself upon one of the trunks, for he began to feel a little uneasy.

"You have been robbed."

"Impossible! Why, I paid twenty pounds for them."

"And they are not worth twenty pence, my poor fellow," said the captain.

Mark Rayner appeared thunderstruck, and the heart of his wife sank within her. She recollected the strong odor of tobacco in the room, and now felt *quite certain* that her imagination had not deceived her when she fancied she detected the smell of gin mixed with it.

"Surely," she faltered, "you must be mistaken. He is a clergyman."

The commander of the Syren gave a knowing whistle.

"We saw his daughter-in-law, too—a widow lady."

"A regular Portsmouth one," observed the sailor. It's the third time she has been bereaved within a twelvemonth, to my certain knowledge. I tell you you have been regularly done—fallen into the hands of a couple of landsharks. Last voyage they sent us three on the same fool's errand, and two by the "Snake," which belongs to the same line. It's an old dodge well known in Liverpool."

"What are we to do?" exclaimed the woman, clasping her hands despondingly.

"Take fresh berths."

"Alas! we have no longer the means."

"Take your traps on shore, then," said the captain. "Those berths are engaged; I can do nothing, but you can see the owners if you like."

It was a faint hope, a very faint one; but Mark took the address, and hurried, with his half-distracted wife, to the counting-house of Messrs. Small and Skinner, who, when they discovered there was no likelihood of the poor plundered dupes taking fresh passages, could scarcely find time to listen to them. In fact, it was a doubt whether they ought not to give them in charge till they could explain their share in the transaction.

As this, however, would have required time, and time with business men is money, the idea was abandoned, and so much debited by the partners to the account of charity, for each considered that he had acted with uncommon liberality on the occasion.

On their return to the docks, Mark found that their luggage had been put on shore. Alone, he might have struggled through the difficulty—a man has so many resources; but with Rose—the thought almost maddened him as he gazed upon her pale features, and sad, despairing looks.

"It is I who have brought her to this," he murmured. "All my fault. But for me she might have been happy and respected."

This self-accusation came as most self-accusations do—too late as affects the past, but it nerved him for the future. He had no friends either to assist or advise him; so, after a few moments' reflection, he decided for himself.

"We must return to London," he said.

His wife shuddered at the words, she had suffered so much there already.

"Possibly we may be in time to catch the old hypocrite who has plundered us; that is our last hope."

"And should that fail?" sobbed Rose.

"Then you must return to your friends at St. Faith's."

"And you, Mark?"

"Go for a soldier," replied her husband, gloomily. "It's nothing more than I deserve."

"I shall never see St. Faith's without you," answered the woman, firmly; "your fate is henceforth mine, though it should drive us to ask our bread from door to door."

These words restored Mark Rayner to something like self-possession. There was more than consolation—he found strength in them. The hope could not be barren that had such love to sustain it, or the world a wilderness whilst one flower, so pure and holy, bloomed for him, and him alone. How firmly the repentant man vowed that, if fortune ever smiled upon him, he would repay her wondrous goodness, atone for the past, and render the future happy!

Rose smiled as she listened to him, and almost forgot her present misery.

How frequently do we hear the thoughtless and unreflecting complain of the dreary prospects of the future—that they cannot see their way clearly, or imagine what it will lead to. They are fools! The cloud which hides the spring of time is the great incentive to existence. Were all the page disclosed, the eye would turn wearied and listless from the volume of life, and lose all interest in perusing it.

Once more the wanderers set out for London, and, on their arrival, hastened to the address in the Tottenham-court-road. We need scarcely inform our readers that the pious curate and his afflicted daughter-in-law had disappeared from their lodgings, which they had only occupied a few days, and left no clue to their retreat. The money was irretrievably lost.

Mark and his wife were somewhat prepared for the result. The blow, therefore, was less severe than might have been expected, and they returned to their lodgings, near Farringdon street.

"There is nothing left for it," sighed the former, when, tired with their journey and excitement, they found themselves in the dull, smoky room of "The Half Moon,' "but the army. I must look out for some regiment bound for foreign service. We have only six pounds left."

Rose proposed another attempt to see Lady Boothroyd.

"It will be useless," answered her husband; "but you can try in the morning, whilst I go out and make inquiries in the neighborhood of the Horse Guards."

His wife struggled successfully with her feelings, and would not add to the bitterness of his self-reproach by letting him perceive a tear.

Oh, what a paradise did the snug little cottage at St. Faith's, and the few acres of land Mark had been too lazy to cultivate, now appear! What would he not have given to have once more had the chance! Toil would have been a pleasure—a perfect luxury. But, like many others, he had trifled with happiness till it had escaped him.

Happiness is something like the bird which has been once limed—it is far more difficult to cage it a second time.

In the morning they started on their several expeditions; Rose to the Regent's-park, in the vain hope of obtaining an interview which her ladyship was resolved not to grant; and her husband to the Horse Guards, the great rendezvous of the recruiting parties. Experience, however, had taught him caution, and he determined to have something surer than the word of the sergeant, that his wife would be permitted to accompany him, before he accepted the fatal shilling.

Being a fine, stalwart fellow, straight as an arrow, broad shouldered, and rather over than under six feet in hight, more than one of the human decoy ducks eyed him wistfully. Sergeant Kite declared that he had taken quite a friendship for him; another swore that he was the model of the adjutant of his regiment, who had obtained a commission after six years' service in the ranks; and a third gray-headed old crimp gravely informed him that the government allowed two hundred and fifty pounds for an outfit *whin* promoted to the epaulette.

"But my wife?" urged Mark.

"Separate room in barracks," exclaimed one.

"School in the regiment for the children," added a second.

"Women ride with the baggage," said a third; "and if industrious, can always make a pretty penny by washing the officers' linen, especially in my regiment, which is bound for India. Leaves Southampton in less than a week; just in time to sail with it. India is the country," he added—"is the country for a fine young fellow to see service in, and no mistake! *Lots of prize-money; promotion certain; natives to wait upon you; palanquin to carry you when fatigued upon march, and coffee always ready to refresh you.*"

If any of our readers should accuse us of making the old sergeant spin too strong a yarn, we advise them to read the placards which have lately appeared against the walls of the Horse Guards, and they will find that, instead of over-coloring, we have but modestly tinted the portrait.

Mark listened, and wisely determined not to believe any one of them. The regiment bound for India certainly tempted him; and, could he have been assured that Rose would be permitted to accompany him, would unhesitatingly have engaged himself, but he required something more positive than the sergeant's word for it.

"I should like to see your colonel," he said.

The colonel was already at Southampton.

"One of the officers, then."

They were at Southampton, too.

Doubtful and irresolute, Mark quitted them, saying he would think of it, and sauntered on the parade in the park, where an elderly officer was inspecting the guard. When the duty was over, and the men dismissed, the intended recruit walked up to him and touched his hat—

"Would you allow me to speak with you, sir?" he said.

"Certainly, my man."

"Are the 01st really ordered to India?"

"Undoubtedly. I dined with Sir Charles Fourreau yesterday; he left town this morning for Southampton. Why do you ask?" he added.

"Because I have some thought of enlisting."

"Can't do better," replied the officer, his eyes resting complacently on the tall, well-built proportions of the speaker.

"But I am married, sir."

"Can't do worse, then," said the gentleman, "unless you have a bad wife, and want to get rid of her."

"But I have a good wife, sir," exclaimed Mark, "whom I dearly love, one of the best women in the world, whom my imprudence has reduced to poverty. But even that has not shaken her affection for me. She has made up her mind to accompany me, and share my fate, whatever it may prove. What I want to know is, whether in the event of my taking the bounty, they will separate us. And so I took the liberty of asking you, knowing that I might rely upon your word."

"All depends upon the colonel, my man," answered the gentleman, struck by the candid, straightforward account Mark gave of himself. "Only a certain number if soldiers' wiver are permitted to accompany the regiment. Sir Charles is proud of his regiment—very proud of it. And—what hight do you stand?"

"Six feet, sir," said the husband of Rose, drawing himself up.

"Plenty of other regiments—mine, for instance."

"I should prefer foreign service, sir."

"Sorry to hear it," observed the officer, drily; "it's a bad sign when a man is anxious to quit his native country. I have given you all the information in my power. Good day to you."

The speaker returned to the orderly-room; and poor Mark, his hopes considerably lessened, with a heavy heart, directed his steps once more toward the city, where he found his wife anxiously expecting his return. Her attempt to see Lady Boothroyd had been fruitless; and, in answer to her inquiries for the steward, the servants informed her Mr. Silex had returned to St. Faith's.

Her husband related his adventure.

To remain in London upon six pounds was impossible, so they at once decided on starting for Southampton. It was a desperate chance, and they staked their last hope and almost their last shilling upon it.

Whilst the train is whirling along the iron road to convey them to their destination, we may as well take advantage of the opportunity and introduce the gallant colonel of the 01st Dragoons to our readers.

Sir Charles Fourreau was a fine soldier-like man of fifty. Although he had seen much service, and had lived rather freely, time had dealt most leniently with him. His figure was still erect as that of any youngster in his regiment; not an officer in it rode better, or attended more sedulously to his duties. It was his pride to command one of the finest bodies of men in her Majesty's service. If discipline was strict, there was little flogging in his regiment. His soldiers both loved and feared him; and the reflection of "What will the colonel say?" induced many a man to keep a check upon his conduct.

Most of his friends had predicted that he would die an old bachelor; great, therefore, was their astonishment, and the disgust of his nephews, when they read in the papers the announcement of his marriage with Lady Bell, the orphan daughter of the late Earl of Clayton. The match had not even the shadow of imprudence to console them, for the bride was young, beautiful, and rich. How ever she came to accept the old soldier puzzled her acquaintance exceedingly. Some suggested that she had met with disappointment, and married out of pique; if so, appearances were exceedingly deceptive, for a lighter-hearted creature never breathed. Others suspected that she had grown tired of living in the country with her two maiden aunts; and yet she invariably spoke of them with the greatest affection. Not one hit upon the real secret, or would have believed it had she confessed it to them—that she loved her husband, who had commenced his courtship by finding fault with her, reasoning with her on her caprices, instead of flattering them as others had done. He was the first man who had ever ventured to speak truth to her; and, if she did not always yield to his arguments, she respected them.

It is a dangerous thing for a man, no matter at what age, to play the mentor with a young and lovely woman. Sir Charles soon began to perceive this; and, like an experienced soldier, thought of retreat. But it was too late; the bird was bound, not by its wings, but by its heart-strings. In a fit of desperation he proposed; and, instead of being laughed at, as he expected for his folly, to his delight and astonishment he found himself accepted.

Six months after their marriage, the regiment was ordered on foreign service. Every one expected, as a matter of course, that the colonel would sell out; and Major Plinlimman, a very choleric Welshman, and a very decided old bachelor, who anticipated succeeding him, made every preparation to that effect. To his astonishment, perhaps, also, to his disappointment, Sir Charles decided on remaining—his wife insisted upon it; she felt delighted with she idea of visiting India—the land of romance, gold, gems, poetry, perfume, and cashmeres. It was in vain that her husband offered to sacrifice his own inclinations on the subject, dwelt on the disadvantages of such a life; the lady refused to listen to him. She had made up her mind to accompany him, that he should not quit the service till he was a general, and, like most wives, carried her point.

It was in vain that her two maiden aunts remonstrated on what they *decidedly considered* the extraordinary resolution of their niece. She listened to them very dutifully, and, when they proposed her remaining with them during the absence of her husband, drily referred them to Sir Charles, who, as a matter of course, refused to listen to any such proposition.

"Bell," said the old soldier, when everything was finally arranged, "my lessons, I fear, have been thrown away. You are as obstinate as ever."

The beautiful culprit looked up in his face, and smiled.

"And are you really angry with me?" she asked.

"Angry!" repeated her husband; "I can only wonder at so much goodness. Would I were twenty years younger!"

"In that case I should have still been Lady Bell Clayton, and you a wretched bachelor," replied his wife. "Much better as it is, Charlie. Do you know why I married you? I'd tell you, only I fear it might make you vain,—and— no—I'd better not."

As a matter of course, the colonel let her have no peace till she did tell him.

"Because I found I could respect as well as love you; look up to you with confidence," said his wife, "and obey you; that is, when you are reasonable, Charlie. Many had sought to win me before you came," she continued, "but they all addressed themselves to my vanity, as if woman possessed neither brains nor heart; told me I was beautiful till I felt sick of hearing it; pronounced me a paragon for merits I had not the slightest claim to, and never gave me credit for one quality which I really possessed—a love of candor, simplicity, and manly truth."

"I may trust her," thought the gratified husband, as he folded her to his heart, "even in the hotbed of Indian society. It cannot force the vices which have no seed in her pure heart."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE
CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE;
OR,
MRS. ARDEN'S COUNTERPLOT.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

When I was a little, a very little girl, I used to go, with a few others, daily to Mrs. Arden's school. How well I remember the pleasant green lanes through which we passed, the quaint old room in which we gathered, with spelling-books and Testaments, and samplers, and the fair, placid face that beamed on us so kindly from beneath the shadowy borders of fine lace that always decorated her caps.

Outside the trees waved their branches in the breeze with a pleasant rustle, and the birds sang sweet songs, and the distant sounds of labor and of animal life came faintly to our ears. It was a pleasant spot, and she was a lonely old lady who taught us the rudiments of knowledge there.

She lived all alone in the little cottage, in whose kitchen she taught the children of the neighbors such simple lore as suited their capacities, and she proved herself an invaluable assistant of their hard-working, overburdened mothers, by keeping them "out of mischief" several hours daily.

We all loved her when we were children, for her strict rule was tempered with mercy, and few children fail to detect between the needful discipline inflicted by love, and the stern injustice of the unloving. When we grew older, we often sought her counsel, her praise or her encouragement. We were sure of her ready sympathy, and had an intuitive trust in her wisdom. It was not until after years that we learned how a nature once as trustful, impulsive and heedless as our own, had been disciplined by sorrow, and though scathed and scarred, had survived the storms of human passion, and outlived all the mistakes of her youth, having come out of the conflict calm, and peaceful, and strong.

Evelyn Howard had been the favorite pupil of Mrs. Arden, and long after she had been transferred to other schools—Miss Lane's Select School for young ladies, and the Seminary—she seldom allowed a day to pass without visiting the little cottage. And when sent away from home to some grand city school to be "finished," she did not forget her beloved friend. Evelyn's first visits, when she came home for vacations, were always to Mrs. Arden's. She would run down the little green lane, through the garden gate, and softly opening the cottage door, stand there upon the threshold radiant with life and beauty, a lovely Hebe, bearing joy to the lonely heart of that aged woman.

Evelyn would twine her round, white arms about the old woman's neck, and kiss her wrinkled cheek, and call her by all the loving names that she could remember. And Mrs. Arden would make her sit down upon the low stool by her side, that had been her seat from childhood, and holding those plump white hands in her own withered and shrunken ones, she would look down into the bright young face, and listen with quiet interest to the girl's prattle, the history of her school troubles and triumphs, the anecdotes of her schoolmates and teachers, and of the little adventures that constituted the romance of her life. Or she and Evelyn would sit down together to her simple and very humble repast, which Evelyn would repeat, again and again, was better than all the feasts to which she had ever been bidden.

More than a year had passed, and Evelyn had never confided to this friend one heart-experience. The little school-girl flirtations into which she had been drawn, had never more than rippled the surface of her affections, if indeed they had touched a deeper feeling than vanity. But when she came home on the second summer, when she walked slowly down the green lane, and with a thoughtful mien stood within the open door of Mrs. Arden's cottage, that good lady, so anxiously watchful of her child's faintest change of expression, needed no other revelation to tell that the founts of feeling had been stirred to their hidden depths.

There was an inexplicable something in the young girl's glance and air, and in every graceful, quiet movement, that seemed as if timed to slow, exquisite music, that told of divine harmonies wakened in her soul, to which her whole life should henceforth be a response.

The ancient childlikeness was gone forever, and though her greeting had lost nothing of its fervid affection, Mrs. Arden could not fail to note the change, nor to observe the long, dreamy silences, so sweet, as she knew by Evelyn's soft smile, that she could not break them. She knew that Evelyn would conquer her maiden shyness, and pour her secret into the heart of her friend.

So she talked to her as usual of all that had occurred during her absence, of the pets which had been left at the cottage to be tended, of her old schoolmates, and a thousand things which had been wont to interest her. She prepared the meal, and spread the table beneath the trees in the garden, but the white biscuits and golden butter, the rich cream and early strawberries, failed to draw one commendation from Evelyn's lips. Her thoughts were far away, feasting upon memory and hope.

But when the sun had set, and the stars began to peep out, glimmering through the uncurtained window, through which, also, the odors won by the gentle evening dews from the perfumed hearts of the flowers came stealing, Evelyn, with her head upon her friend's bosom, told her all the story of her love.

Clarence Chesterwood—she pronounced the name in tender, liquid sounds, dwelling on each syllable as if it were the sweetest music, and with a sort of coy pride repeating it again and again—Clarence Chesterwood was a young New Yorker—a man of genius—a rising man in his profession. He was a serious, thoughtful man—not in the least such an one, Evelyn said, as would seem likely to have been attracted by a giddy school-girl. But he loved her—yes, he had told her so, in words and tones that she should never, never forget. He was coming to Granville—coming to visit her, and to ask her of her father. Papa would be sure to consent; for though Clarence Chesterwood was poor now, he had so much genius, and was succeeding so well in his profession, that everybody predicted a proud career for him.

It was too much honor for her, little Evelyn Howard, who knew so very little, to be the wife of such a man. Only if she could make him happy, it would be all that she desired. Of course papa could never refuse—did dear Mrs. Arden think he could?

Mrs. Arden could only bid the girl be patient and hopeful. A presentiment that her heart was to receive a shock—that the course of this love, which seemed so genuine and guileless, was destined to obstructions—fell darkly upon Mrs. Arden's feelings. She could scarcely express the sympathy she really felt, and Evelyn felt a tear upon her cheek as her friend kissed her at parting, and turned back into her lonely cottage. As Evelyn walked home through the green lane, with her father's old servant behind her for a protector, she pondered upon Mrs. Arden's evident emotion. She had expected a glad sympathy in her feelings, and it was not until the thought came to her mind that some memory of youth and love might have been awakened by her story in the ancient woman's breast, that she forgot her disappointment. A letter that awaited her, and heralded the coming of her lover on the morrow, chased all saddened thoughts away, and sent her to her pillow with a sweet, restless joy that drove away slumber, until, tired even of her pleasant fancies, she fell asleep, and into the land of rosy dreams, at an early hour in the morning.

Evelyn was a petted child, and when she was found sleeping at the breakfast hour, nobody thought of awaking her. She should have breakfast whenever she awoke, her papa said; and as he was passing her door before going out to his business, he stole in and kissed her rosy cheek, and called down a blessing upon the head of his beautiful darling.

The caress awoke Evelyn, and she threw her arms around her father's neck, and kissed him in return, calling him her "dear, best papa."

"Ah, little rogue, I know what those pretty words mean," said Judge Howard; "you want to coax your poor papa out of something. Come, now, what is it? Out with it at once, for I must be off to the office."

"Oh, papa, how shrewd you are! You lawyers see and understand everything. So promise me, promise me that—that you will grant anything I may ask of you to-day."

"But that would be giving a pledge blindly. Tell me what you want—is it some money to buy finery? Or a present for your old school-mistress? Tell me quickly, for I must be off."

"No, no, it's not money, papa, but something better than money. Just promise me, you best papa."

"Something better than money, eh? Some school-girl notion! But I suppose I must promise, for I hear the carriage coming round. There, don't smother me because I have made a foolish promise, or I'll retract it."

The judge went laughing from the room, and as Evelyn sank back upon her pillow with an ineffable smile upon her lovely face, she heard his cheerful voice giving directions to the servant beneath her window, and the next moment the sound of the carriage wheels crunching the gravel as he drove away.

Early in the afternoon Clarence Chesterwood was announced. Mrs. Howard was out, and the lovers met alone. After a short visit Mr. Chesterwood departed, informing Evelyn that he should return in the evening, to solicit her father's consent to their engagement. He would even deny himself the pleasure of a longer visit then, because he would do nothing without the approval of her parents.

In the evening, accordingly, Mr. Chesterwood called, and having sent up his card, was shown into the library, where Judge Howard presently joined him. A half hour passed, and then Evelyn was summoned to the library. Judge Howard met her at the door, and as he led her forward, he said—

"This gentleman, my dear, informs me that he comes here with your approval, to ask of me the most precious thing I have to bestow. Shall I grant his request? Tell me, my darling?"

"Yes, papa," faltered Evelyn, blushing, and not daring to meet the eager eyes fastened upon her face; "oh, yes, if you please, and besides, you know what you promised me this morning."

"And so you expected all this, and so coaxed that promise from me. What an artful little plotter! Here, take her, Chesterwood; she's quite too shrewd for me."

The judge placed his daughter's hand in that of Clarence Chesterwood, and hurried from the room, thus striving by light words to hide the emotion that made his voice falter, and his eyes overflow. And so Evelyn Howard and Clarence Chesterwood were betrothed. Happy, happy hour!

* * * * * *

A year had passed since the evening that witnessed the betrothal of the lovers—a year of quiet joy to them, but marked by changes and misfortunes that threatened them with unanticipated sorrow. Judge Howard's floating capital had all been invested in some grand speculations, that promised, on paper, wonderful success. Elated by his prospects, and blinded by the apparent favor of fortune, he had raised money in every possible way to add to these investments, even by mortgage upon all his real estate, and his wife's fortune, including the house, with its elegant grounds and offices, where his family resided. All he possessed was risked; and when the last mad venture failed, and the bubble burst, he was utterly ruined. The shock proved too much for him. He was prostrated by two quickly recurring attacks of paralysis; and within one week his wife and Evelyn saw themselves plunged into poverty, and bewailed the hopeless illness of the strong man on whom until then they had leaned for support.

Mrs. Howard, the step-mother of Evelyn, was a weak, selfish woman. She had been proud in prosperity—proud of her position, of her husband's high reputation, and of the beauty and grace of her step-daughter. She had no force of character by which to withstand the assaults of misfortune, and so she yielded to a weak despair.

She contrived, however, to maintain her influence over the weakened mind of her husband; and when, at length, a project occurred to her by which she might again build up the fortunes of the family, or at least secure to herself a competence, she did not hesitate to urge it upon his attention.

She had a distant relative, a bachelor of immense wealth, whose ugly person and morose disposition had hitherto prevented his marriage. This man had long since fixed his regards upon the young Evelyn, but upon the appearance of Clarence Chesterwood upon the scene, had reluctantly withdrawn, without putting forward his pretensions, except privately, to his cousin. To him, then, Mrs. Howard wrote in her affliction, inviting him to visit her; and when he came she encouraged a renewal of his thwarted suit. Her representations and reproaches won her half imbecile husband to consent to her plan.

Then followed a bitter season of persecution for poor Evelyn. Clarence Chesterwood, who had come down to be near his betrothed in her afflictions, was ignominously dismissed by Mrs. Howard, and denied admission to the judge, with whom he wished to plead his cause. He saw Evelyn once or twice, by stealth, at Mrs. Arden's; and then leaving his weeping betrothed in the arms of that excellent woman, he tore himself away. Evelyn was left to bear the persecution of those who should have been her friends. Mrs. Howard would picture to her the misery and suffering into which her invalid father and his devoted wife would shortly be plunged; her own trials and struggles as the wife of a man with his fortune yet to make, and all embittered by the consciousness that she might have averted all this—that wealth and luxury for herself, and all the comforts his situation demanded for her father, had been in her power, and she had refused them.

And Judge Howard, in his feeble, imperfect utterance, with his mournful glance fixed full upon her face, would plead with her not to sacrifice herself and her parents.

"I always intended to help Chesterwood, and to put him upon the path to fortune. But all that is past. He is poor, poor fellow, and my little Evelyn knows nothing about poverty. Better take Sylvester Fenwick, and let Chesterwood go. Then we can all stay here, and be as happy as the day is long."

And Mrs. Howard would say:

"Remember, Evelyn, a daughter's first duty is to her parents; and I am sure you owe me as much as if I were your real mother, whom you cannot remember. Here's Sylvester Fenwick, who offers you everything a woman could desire of wealth and luxury, besides a home, and everything for your parents, while Chesterwood is poor, and can hardly give *you* a decent home. If you persist in marrying him, you undutiful girl, your poor father and I, who have sacrificed everything for him, will have to go to the alms-house, for aught I can see to prevent us."

"But surely, mamma, if Mr. Fenwick is so anxious to assist you, why cannot he do it all the same if I do not marry him? He knows I cannot marry him, because I do not love him, and because I am engaged to Mr. Chesterwood."

"Whom you *do* love, I suppose you would say; for you have more than a school-girl's ordinary amount of romance. But that will not serve you when you see your father and me dying in the poor house, to which in your disregard of the plainest demands of duty you have consigned us."

And so the girl's mind was harrassed by conflicting feelings; her judgment biassed and swayed by arguments she knew not how to meet; her heart torn by appeals which she could not answer, until she began to look upon herself as a victim selected for the sacrifice; and gradually she settled down into the conviction that there was no escape from the duty before her. She would give up Chesterwood; she would marry Fenwick, since her parents desired it, and thus secure to them all that wealth could bestow; then, perhaps, God would mercifully let her die, since she would have accomplished the single duty of her life.

She went to her parents and acquainted them with her decision, which was received rapturously; but, begging to be excused from an interview with Fenwick, she stole out and took her way down the green lane, toward Mrs. Arden's cottage.

That excellent woman had been absent from her home for several weeks, and during the bitterest season of her trial, Evelyn had missed her advice and sympathy. To her, now, the poor girl fled, and poured out upon her sympathizing bosom her tears and the history of all she had suffered and sacrificed.

"My child," said Mrs. Arden, after she had listened to Evelyn's broken narration, "this must not be. I speak as one in authority. Clarence Chesterwood, whom I have summoned, will arrive here to-morrow evening. Then you must become his wife. Here, beneath my humble roof the ceremony shall be performed; and when once he has the power to deliver you from this snare, I will place the means in his hands by which the comfort of your parents shall be secured, and their willing acquiescence in your marriage gained."

Evelyn had gazed at Mrs. Arden as she spoke in extreme astonishment, mixed with gladness. A singular dignity seemed suddenly to invest the aged woman. She truly spoke as one in authority, and her words convinced and calmed the sorrowing girl. Promising an explanation when Clarence arrived, Mrs. Arden soon dismissed her to her home; and Evelyn returned thither hopeful and even happy, so fully did she trust the words of her friend.

The next evening she met Chesterwood at the cottage, almost believing that it was but to say farewell, as the preparations for her marriage had that day been commenced at home; but his cheerful appearance, and Mrs. Arden's confident look, somewhat re-assured her. The strange events through which she had passed seemed to have prepared her for anything that might occur, and she listened almost without surprise to the strange tale which Mrs. Arden proceeded to relate.

"Evelyn," she said, "when I first heard of the project to marry you to Fenwick I determined to prevent it. I knew that I had the power, and I might have used it then, but determined first to arrange all things so that none could blame the course I had taken. I would far more gladly have looked upon your dying hour than upon that of your bridal with a man you did not, could not love. I have known the misery of a marriage without love. You must never know it. I was very young when my parents married me to a man more than twice my age. He had wealth and station, and they were poor. I had beauty, and he bought it and me with his gold; and yet I believe he loved me well, though I felt at first only indifference, that soon became downright aversion. But thus I lived on for years. I dressed, and danced, and traveled, and was admired; and many envied me; but they knew not the restless discontent that drove me from my home, and from the little children growing up there under the careless charge of servants, because I hated my luxuries, and abhorred the hand that bestowed them. All these years my heart was unawakened, but my time came at last. I had not the safeguard of the faintest regard for my husband, and so, when one with insinuating words of vailed sympathy for sorrows that he thus dared to hint, came daily and bowed at my feet, I learned to listen for his footstep, and distinguish the proud bearing of his head in the crowd, and to hang entranced upon his lightest word. Oh! my children. I was very weak, but not sinful as I might have been, for my husband saved me. He loved me after all my years of coldness and scorn, and he was watchful. So one day, with words of tenderest affection, he told me that he knew all, and that if I would but trust him he would save me. He would take me far away, and give me change of scene, and many pleasures, that I might forget; and he said—I shall never forget with what a tender humility—that he had been very wrong in winning my beautiful youth for the garland of his age. But he was old now, and could not live long; and he bade me be patient, and wait for my freedom!

"I fell at his feet in an agony of remorse and contrition, and when he raised me tenderly in his arms, and told me, that he could forgive what was after all so natural in me, far better than the wrong he had himself done me, for the first time in all our married life I threw my arms about his neck and kissed him. I was glad that I had given him that one caress when next morning I was summoned to his bedside to see him die. His illness was but for a few hours, and then I was left alone—a wealthy, young widow in the world's parlance.

"My lover sought me when all was over and I was free to receive my friends once more. But I had given orders that he should not be admitted, and never saw him more. The scales had fallen from my eyes, and I saw the true character of the man, and though my heart still turned toward him, for I longed for sympathy, I resolutely refused to see him. Of all my children only one survived, my youngest son. Leaving him in the care of his guardian I secluded myself from the world. At first the feelings that prompted this retreat were morbid and irrational, but when time and thought had brought their healing discipline, I still hesitated to leave my retreat, and though always informing myself of my child's welfare, as a voluntary punishment for the faults of my early life, I refused to see him. He grew up without knowledge of his mother's existence; until to-day he has remained in ignorance of it, though I have watched his course proudly. But now, at last, my child."

Clarence Chesterwood's arms were round the ancient, trembling form that lay upon his bosom, and tears that were no disgrace to his manhood fell from his eyes. Evelyn wept in sympathy, and it was long before the group returned to calmness.

"My child, do you forgive me?" said Mrs. Arden.

"I have nothing to forgive," Clarence Chesterwood replied, "except the loss of my mother's society and care. For the rest the wrong lay far back of the involuntary outreachings of her heart, and it is not for her child to forgive."

"I preferred that my boy should never know the temptations of wealth," said Mrs. Arden, when she had grown calmer. "I preferred that he should gain strength by manny struggles, and so left him almost unaided to win his way along the rough path of fortune. But when I saw the uses to which my hitherto useless wealth might now be put, I returned to New York and reclaimed it. Here, my son, are vouchers for the larger part of all I possess. It is transferred to your name, and is now your own. And here is my wedding present for my daughter. Look up, child, the good minister will be here directly, and before I take you to my room to dress you in the wedding finery which I brought from the great city, look at the present I bestow—a deed of your dear, old home, clear from all encumbrances, and beyond the power even of this man to whom I am about to give you."

Evelyn, amidst smiles and blushes and tears, thanked her kind friend, and then, without a misgiving, went away to don the simple bridal dress which she had prepared.

"If your father had still retained his power of mind I should not have done this. But he is influenced by his wife, and it is better to place a refusal beyond his power before we confide to him our own plans and prospects. It was only to this arrangement that Clarence yielded when I named my plan."

In a short time the good minister, to whom all had been confided and who had given his approval, united the pair. When Evelyn returned to her home, now really hers, and brought thither her husband, armed with a husband's authority, in addition to his immense wealth, even Mrs. Howard was silenced, while Fenwick slunk away and was seen no more. The judge, happy in the happiness of his child, and too imbecile to comprehend fully all that had past, seemed in a little while to have forgotten Fenwick and his suit, and always welcomed Chesterwood with peculiar affection to his bedside. As Mrs. Howard cared only for the luxuries to be purchased by Evelyn's sacrifice, she was finally satisfied to receive them from the hand of Mr. Chesterwood, and subsisted upon his bounty for many years, selfish and exacting to the last. Mrs. Arden still retained her cottage, and the green lane is now daily trodden by the feet of merry children who love to resort to grandmamma's fireside; while Chesterwood is winning the highest honors in the gift of his fellow-citizens, and Evelyn, still beautiful and good, is beloved in her home, and greatly admired abroad.

FALSE.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

Ah! I remember one springtide agone,
We stood in the twilight alone—
Softly the splendor of sunset's decline
Spoke to thy young heart and mine!
And I sang to my soul,
Its wild bliss to control,
Be this bright lady the star of my goal—
Ever be happy! for sorrows depart,
She loves with a faithful heart!

Now the sweet springtide hath ripened, and gone,
I stand in the shadows alone!
And pale as the roses when summer hath fled,
Young Hope in my heart lieth dead;
And I moan with my soul,
No strength can control;
Oh no, for the beauty! the star of thy goal,
Storms have arisen, the splendors are o'er,
Proud Adzlin loves me no more!

MY FRIEND'S GHOST STORY.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

I once had a friend—I say had, for he is dead now, poor fellow—by the name of Lance Walters, who possessed the most remarkable nerve of any one I ever saw. Nothing seemed to alarm him—nothing could frighten him. I have seen him, when the pestilential scourge was taking down nearly every other individual, as calm, collected, and apparently as cheerful as one at a wedding feast. I have seen him, when the lightning flashed with blinding vividness, and the thunder was crashing with a stunning power, sit coolly and collectedly by a window, quietly reading, apparently without being aware that anything unusual was going on around him. When the cholera was here, in 1832, it gave him no uneasiness. When that wise savant from Europe startled the world with the prediction that all sublunary things were about to be brought to a close by an erratic comet, my friend laughed. When, a few years subsequently, all the stars of heaven seemed shooting from their spheres and falling in one fiery shower, and hundreds were quaking with terror, believing the last day had come, Lance was one who stood looking at the phenomenon, and thought it a very pleasant and beautiful sight. When the day drew near which that *soi disant* prophet, Father Miller, had so rampantly preached as the end of time, and thousands of frightened fanatics were preparing to put on their assension robes, for a glorious, saintly, ærial flight, Walters treated his friends to an essay on the philosophy of fools. In short, nothing disturbed him; he had an easy digestion, and slept soundly; and he could at any time—before meals or afterward, morning, noon, or night, or in the middle of the night—balance a glass full of wine on a single finger, and neither spill a drop of the liquid nor show a tremor of his own nerves. He had a good eye, and was a dead shot; and if he ever failed to put a ball in the bull's-eye at a hundred yards, without rest, the fault was in the rifle and not in him.

I think I have said enough to show that Lance Walters was a man of remarkable nerve; and a man of remarkable nerve, let me observe, is a man remarkable for never knowing what it is to fear—for real fear is something which always springs from a disturbed condition of the nervous system. Lance had traveled a good deal; and, in the course of his career, had met with a number of startling adventures. He had been in Texas in his earlier days, and had seen men coolly shot down as dogs; he had seen them fight with knives, and both fall in the contest, covered with ghastly wounds; he had more than once had a loaded pistol presented at his breast, and fully believed that the next moment would be his last; and yet in all these trials of nerve his features had scarcely paled, his eye had never quailed, and not a quiver of a single muscle had ever been perceived.

The bravest, however, have their weak points, and Lance Walters had his, as my story, or perhaps I should rather say *his* story, will show.

"Were you *ever* afraid?" I once said to him, as we sat conversing upon kindred subjects.

"Once," he replied, "never but once—I never knew what fear was but once."

"And pray," said I, "on what particular occasion was that?"

"A particular occasion, indeed!" he rejoined, as he lit a fresh Havana and threw himself back in his easy chair, while the cloud of smoke which soon enveloped him seemed to indicate that even the recollection brought with it some little nervous excitement. "Do you know," he pursued, "I was never a believer in the supernatural?"

"You were never a believer in anything, except a kind of iron immobility, which you were pleased to term courage," I replied.

"I say, my friend, I never *was* a believer in the supernatural up to a certain period; I do not say I am a believer in it now; but this much I shall say, that there are some things I have seen, belonging either to heaven or earth, or both, which far surpass my comprehension, and seem unexplainable by any known law."

"Well, go on," said I, with interest, "and give me the particulars of that particular occasion, when for once, and only once in his life, Lance Walters was scared."

"Well, scared is a term I am not partial to," smiled my friend; "but no matter. To begin, then, you must know I was once traveling through the interior of Alabama; and being one day belated in reaching my destination, I concluded to ask a night's entertainment of a planter, whose dwelling loomed up invitingly on my way. I rode up to the door, and found the proprietor himself quietly sitting on the piazza, indulging in the luxury of what, had I been among the Choctaws, the original proprietors of the soil, I should unhesitatingly have pronounced a calumet of peace. Having passed the usual salutations of the day, and replied to his inquiry, that I was neither a pedlar nor a relation to one, I quietly made the proposition of passing the night beneath his roof. He gave a cordial assent, and some half a dozen negroes very speedily disposed of my horse and valise. I next proceeded to make myself agreeable with mine host—a hale, hearty man of fifty, of a pleasant and sociable turn of mind—and soon we were in full blast, chatting away on all sorts of matters pertaining to all parts of the country—east, west, north and south.

"A summons to supper interrupted our conversation, and forthwith mine host conducted me to a beautifully-supplied table, where I flatter myself I did ample justice to any quantity of broiled chicken, bacon, eggs, etc. After supper we took a smoke; and the feelings of my southern entertainer having by this time risen to fever heat in favor of his northern guest, he proposed that we should silently indulge in a stimulating distillation called peach-brandy. I assented, and I think I am justified in adding, that neither of us drank more than a quart. One thing is pretty certain, however: in the exact ratio that the liquor went down, our spirits and fancies went up; and from beginning with the practical, we glided into the poetical, advanced to the terrible, and wound up with the marvelous; that is to say, from talking of crops and cattle, we proceeded to quote Shakspeare and Byron, pushed on to duels and street encounters, and ended with ghost stories. I did not believe in the last—not even with the assistance of the brandy—but my southern friend did. I could tell as marvelous tales as he, but then, unlike him, I could not swear to them; and I came near getting myself into trouble by doubting that he believed all he said he did.

"'So you are incredulous?' he queried, looking me steadily in the eye.

"'Most assuredly, sir,' I replied. 'What! talk of ghosts, and believe in them? Upon my soul, that is a little too much for a man that has traveled! I have always heard of these things as being at a distance, or else as having happened in some demolished structure, and so I have pretty much settled it in my own mind that their ghostships are always a great way off from an enterprising mortal, or else have long since gone quietly and snugly to rest.'

"'Would you like to see a ghost?' he inquired.

"'If it is convenient,' said I.

"'Come! what do you say to my own house, here, being haunted?'

"'I should like to hear what you say to it first,' returned I.

"'Well, sir, I say then, that one room is nightly visited with something supernatural.'

"'I am very happy to hear it,' I rejoined; 'and if that room is to let, I should like to engage it, for one night at least.'

"'But are you really serious,' he inquired, 'in wishing to lodge in a haunted room?'

"'Serious as a judge, if not as sober as a priest,' laughed I.

"'Well, then, young man, I will try your mettle; you shall have the room, for one night at least—that is, if I can get my darkies into it long enough to attend to the sleeping arrangements.'

"'Do you really pretend to say,' pursued I, somewhat quizzingly, 'that there is a ghostly performance there every night?'

"'Well, I will let you report in the morning whether there is one there this night or not.'

"'But it must really be ghostly,' said I, 'for any human performer will be likely to get what he will not want to keep.'

"'Use your weapons in any way you please,' he rejoined, 'only be careful and not damage my house and furniture more than is necessary.'

"After some further conversation, during which I puzzled myself not a little to ascertain whether my host was really in earnest or not, he ordered his head female domestic to see that the bed in the haunted room was in proper condition, and the furniture well dusted. I watched her, as he gave these directions, thinking to detect something like a covert smile; but so far from it, I even fancied that the wench turned a shade lighter; and her exclamation of, 'Oh, Marse John! ef de gen'lman's gwine to sleep dar, de Lord help him!' seemed to be spoken with something like horror. Could it be possible there was anything in it? Were they indeed in earnest? Was there such a thing as a real ghost out of Shakspeare? Pooh! pshaw! nonsense!

"All things must come to an end, and so did our smoking, talking, and drinking. At last I rose, with my nerves less steady than usual; and my host himself conducted me to my supernatural chamber, through a row of rolling eyes and ebony faces, which were turned upon me with the expression of beings who believed I had sold myself to the Evil One, and was about to hand him over his bargain.

"'Well,' said I, as my host sat down the light upon the table, which I saw had recently been dusted, 'how soon is this performance to begin? for, thanks to that brandy of yours, I shall be asleep in something like a quarter of an hour.'

"'Young man!' solemnly replied my superstitious friend, 'you jest now—but if you jest to-morrow morning, I will give you the best boy on my plantation, and say you are the bravest man that ever rode through Alabama!'

"With this he very gravely shook me by the hand, wished me a safe deliverance from the woes to come, and retired with the dignity of a state functionary, leaving me in a frame of mind something between a grin, a yawn, and a horror

"Finding myself entirely alone, I took a quiet survey of the apartment, but discovered nothing remarkable. In one corner stood a bed, and near it an old-fashioned bureau; a table, a settee, and two or three chairs, were ranged along the walls; at the windows hung white muslin curtains, and the floor was covered with a sort of matting—the whole apartment, in fact, having the appearance of a genteel, country sleeping-room. I looked out of the windows, and found they opened upon the garden. I then examined the walls carefully, the matting, every corner, crack, and crevice, to be certain there was no chance of playing a trick upon me, though I hardly thought my host was one to sanction anything of that kind. I next locked the door, and then examined my pistols, and placed them with my knife under my pillow. Then, having arranged the means of striking a light, in a case of emergency, I proceeded to undress and turn in; and finding all right, I finally put out the light. The room was now quite dark, and I looked to see my supernatural operators begin their nocturnal orgies; but having looked in vain till my heavy eyelids began to droop, I gradually yielded to the somnific influence, and a kind of forgetfulness succeeded.

"I am not certain whether I slept or not; but I was suddenly aroused by feeling something like a cold hand placed upon my mouth, followed by a kind of stifling sensation, not unlike that produced by nightmare.

"'Well,' thought I, 'this is cool, certainly. I am in for it now, at all events; and so let us see who will come out second best.'

"My first idea was to carefully raise my hand, and suddenly grasp the hand of the unknown; and then, if I found a body to it, to put that particular body in a condition not to play tricks upon travelers any more. But in attempting to raise my hand I made the startling discovery that it was paralyzed.

"This was the first shock of anything like fear which my system ever received; and I freely admit the sensation was not a pleasant one. What could it mean? Was it in reality nightmare, or something else? I knew nothing human could paralyze me, and for the first time I began to think there might be some foundation for the stories of my host. But, pshaw! it was a dream—I knew it was a dream—a kind of waking dream—a dyspeptic dream—superinduced by a hearty supper, some over-indulgences afterward, and the ideas fixed upon my mind when I went to rest.

"I made another effort—a stronger and more determined effort—and brought up my hand like lightning; but just as I grasped for the intruding hand, it seemed to be removed, and I felt something like a light blow upon my temples.

"'Have a care, whoever you are!' said I; 'for I am armed, and will not be trifled with!'

"As I spoke, I fancied I heard a low, mocking laugh; and at the same instant the bed seemed to be raised up from the floor, and rocked like a cradle.

"Nothing daunted, though somewhat mystified, I grasped my knife and pistols, sprung out of bed and under it, but found nothing. Then, strangely enough, the room, which had till now been very dark, suddenly appeared slightly illuminated, so that I could see all over it. I came out from under the bed, and heard a heavy jar, as if the latter had suddenly been lifted and then dropped back to its place. This was strange! very strange! but I would find out the secret; and I hurried about the apartment, examining every object by the new and gradually diffused light, which was not unlike that of early day.

"But, then, whence came this light, which was of itself as much a mystery as the rest? I hastily drew back the curtains of the windows—but all was dark without—not a ray came through the glass—and this astonished me exceedingly. Where *could* this light come from? and what could be the cause of it? If there was a lantern, a lamp, or a fire, in an adjoining apartment, I knew I should more distinctly perceive the light through a crevice than in the body of the room itself—yet I could discover nothing to lead me to suppose that any other place was illuminated.

"I spent some quarter of an hour in looking over and under everything I could find, and then went and sat down on the bed; but just as I did so, the apartment suddenly became dark again, and I distinctly felt a hand grasp my ankle. As I cautiously glided my own hand down to it, it seemed to be removed, and the same instant I felt a smart blow upon my forehead, followed by another low, taunting laugh.

"I now began to feel strangely. This was a species of jugglery that passed my comprehension. Had the room not been mysteriously lighted at all, I fancied I might account for the rest as a trick; but that light was something for which I could fix upon no rational cause; and not being able to discover the source of the light, the rest became alike mysterious and inexplicable.

"Next followed sounds, not unlike the rushing and moaning of winds—the very room itself seemed to rock—and I heard a slow, steady, measured tread, with a clanking noise as of chains. With my pistol and knife firmly grasped, and both ready for action, I waited for the steps to approach me; but though they seemed to be continually advancing, they apparently came no nearer. Presently I felt a cold air blowing upon my face; and believing that some trap-door had been opened near me, I reached for my matches, struck a light, and looked eagerly around me; but everything was exactly as at first—nothing seemed to have been disturbed in the least.

"I now made another thorough search around the walls for a secret door; and then, lifting the matting by degrees, I also carefully examined the floor underneath; and having thus fully satisfied myself that there was no entrance to the room except through the door and windows—and the door was still locked, with the key remaining in it, and the windows I knew had not been opened—I threw myself down upon a seat, and pondered on the mystery for more than an hour, occasionally pinching myself, to be certain I was awake.

"At last, finding I could not settle the matter to my own satisfaction, I proceeded to make another thorough examination of everything and every place—actually opening the drawers of the bureau to see that no one was concealed within—and then once more put out the light. The very instant I did so, however, I felt myself touched in twenty places at the same time, by what appeared to me to be twenty hands; while something like a brush was drawn rapidly up and down over my face several times. I now began to grow uneasy—to be in some degree alarmed—to believe indeed there might be more things in heaven and earth than had been dreamed of in my philosophy.

"'In the name of God,' said I, solemnly—'if this be aught from the other world, make known your wish, and depart to your rest!'

"From that moment, for something like half an hour, I neither heard a sound, nor felt a touch; and throwing myself once more upon the bed, I resolved to sleep out the night, let it be what it would, and make such a report in the morning as I might see proper.

"With this intent I closed my eyes, and gradually fell into a drowsy state as at first; but suddenly a bright flash, like that of the most vivid lightning, brought me up with a start, and I found the room illuminated as before, and heard several strange noises all around me. My feelings at that moment I can only describe as a kind of mingled impression of awe and terror—of something wild and weird-like—a secret sensation of something fearful and unearthly. A weak, faint, sickening feeling came over me; and closing my eyes, I fell back, completely exhausted. On looking up again, the room was as dark as the blackest night, except in one single spot overhead, where there seemed to burn a kind of small, bluish light, that illuminated nothing around it.

"This was too much. I felt I would rather acknowledge myself vanquished, than courageously remain involved in such terrible mystery through the night; and tremblingly I rose, with the intention of finding my way out of the apartment.

"I had scarcely touched my feet to the floor, however, when I experienced a kind of paralyzing shock, followed by a sensation of being lifted and swung in the air. The next moment I seemed to drop heavily; and as I advanced a step, with my hair fairly standing on end, a cold, clammy hand grasped mine. Determined to know what it belonged to, my fingers closed upon it like a vice; while with the other hand I felt along an arm that seemed to end in air, without other form or body attached. The very acme of horror now seized me; this could belong to nothing human; it was indeed a creation of the invisible inhabitants of the invisible world; and with a long, loud, despairing shriek, I fell."

Here my friend, Lance Walters, brought his narrative to a pause.

"Well!" I exclaimed, in no little excitement; "what then?"

"I hardly know what then," he replied. "The next I remember, I found myself in bed, with the old planter and his wife, and some half a dozen negroes standing around me, and a neighboring leech taking blood from my arm. I recovered in the course of the day, and in the afternoon took leave of my entertainer, fully determined never to spend another night beneath his roof. You perceive," he concluded, with a smile, "I did not get a darkey for a present, nor had I the honor of being accounted the bravest man that ever rode through Alabama."

"But what was the mystery?" said I.

"Ah, what indeed!" mused Lance.

"Was it nightmare—a dream—a chemical trick—or was it really something supernatural?"

"That is what I have been trying to settle ever since," replied Lance Walters; "but, till the day of my death, I fear it will remain a mystery to me. Enough that I was really frightened for once; and I was only too glad to get away, without asking or being asked any unnecessary questions. Let me trouble you for another cigar!"

GREATNESS AND MINUTENESS OF NATURE.

The first thing which presents itself to man, when he surveys himself, is his body—that is to say, a certain portion of matter which is proper to himself. But to understand what it is, he must compare it with all that is above him and below him, in order to ascertain his exact limits.

Let him not stop, therefore, to consider only the objects by which he is surrounded: let him contemplate all nature in her high and complete majesty; let him consider that glittering light, placed like an everlasting lamp to illuminate the universe; let him regard the earth as a speck compared with the vast circle described by that planet, and let him wonder that in turn this vast circle itself is but a very feeble speck in comparison with that round which the stars rolling in the firmament embrace. But if his sight is here arrested, let his fancy pass on—it will sooner be weary of conceiving than nature of producing. All we see of the world is but an invisible spot in the ample womb of nature: no idea can approach the extent of its spaciousness. In vain we inflate our conceptions, we can generate nothing but atoms in the scale with the reality of things. It is an infinite sphere, the center of which is everywhere, whilst we look in vain for its circumference. Finally, it is one of the greatest among the manifest signs of the omnipotence of God, that our imagination is lost in this idea.

But to offer another prodigy to man, no less astonishing, let him investigate the most delicate things. Let a handworm, for instance, display to him, in the minuteness of its body, parts incomparably smaller—legs, with their joints, veins, humors in their blood, and vapors in those drops; then, dividing again these last things, let him exhaust his strength and conception, and let the last object to which he can attain become this time that of our argument: he will think, perhaps, that such is the last minuteness of nature. We will reproduce to him not only the visible world, but moreover all he is capable of imagining of nature's immensity, within the close of that imperceptible atom. Let him lose himself in these marvels, fully as prodigious by their minuteness as the others by their great volume. For who can help wondering that our body, which of late was not to be perceived in the universe, imperceptible itself in the bosom of things, has now become a colossus, a world, or rather a whole creation, with respect to the last minute object which is beyond our attainment.

"TRAIN UP A CHILD," &c.

A father who wishes to secure his children's love, will, in educating them, look beyond the exigencies of the day; he will not selfishly indulge them in luxuries which he has almost a certainty of not bequeathing to them on his death. What can be more cruel than to bring those young persons up in a station which they must, at no great distance of time, relinquish—to accustom them to society and associations which they cannot always command? The girl's mind is enervated; she views the world through a medium which is, in her case, deceptive, and acquires wants and ideas unfitted to her future lot. This barbarous indulgence deadens her affections; and when the inevitable reverse comes, she is the first to complain of the unwise judgment which renders it so severe. The schoolboy, on the other hand, is often sent to a school or college unsuited to his fortune, with an allowance of pocket-money equal to that of his richer companions, but entirely disproportioned to his father's means. He acquires different friends—different views of life from those at home. Money has not the same relative value; he squanders his "tin," and the unthinking parents laughingly shake their heads over his extravagance: it adds to their importance—keeps up their "appearance;" so they do not check it. But the boy becomes a young man—he has grown up with these false ideas of right and wrong; he would, as usual, do as his companions have done. Suddenly he finds himself pulled up—thrown into a sphere widely apart from theirs: often he sinks under the trial—dies of disappointed hopes; oftener still he rebels—he kicks against changed circumstances which he cannot understand—for which he cannot account—since there is nothing altered at home, and he alone feels the reverse. He insists on what he considers his rights—is extravagant because he has not been taught the worth of money—plunges into debt, and is cast off by an angry father as unprincipled and ungrateful. "Train up a child in the way it should go"—"as the twig is bent so is the tree inclined." Economy and self-denial must be inculcated, both by precept and example, from childhood—they cannot be acquired with the first tail-coat—in the passage from the school-house to the counting-room.

SCIENCE.

By its means man dares to overleap the narrow bounds in which nature seems to have confined him; a citizen of every republic, an inhabitant of every empire, the whole world becomes his country. Science, like a quick and faithful guide, accompanies him from country to country, from kingdom to kingdom; it reveals to him their laws, their manners, their religion, and their government: he comes back loaded with the spoils of the east and west; and, uniting foreign riches to his own treasures, it appears as if science had taught him how to render all the nations of the earth tributary to his doctrine.

Disdaining the limits of time as well as those of place, one would think it had called him to life long before his birth. For he is the man of every age, as of every country. For him all the sages of antiquity have thought, spoken, and acted; or rather he has lived along with them, he has heard their lessons, he has been the witness to their great examples. Still more attentive to record their manners than to admire their knowledge, what an incitement their language leaves in his mind! What a glorious strife do their actions kindle in his heart!

NATURE A MIRROR OF HUMANITY.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

'Tis thine to show it, dark and awful path
Leading the pilgrim to Adiron's peak,
Filled with a forest's ruin, where the wrath
Of hurricanes their high ambition speak
In widest desolation?—Dost thou seek
The topmost crag that thrones strong Power's hight?
But seldom there the footsteps of the Meek—
That pathway shows unto the startled sight
A thousand things o'erthrown that checked the upward flight!

Didst thou not show it, Indiana's glen,
Where summer's garland of selectest flowers
Made sacred covert from the eyes of men,
And birds were sleeping in the silent bowers
Filled with white moonlight, and the silver hours
Brought love and thee, thou long lost, plighted child!
But now instinctive where the darkness lowers
On solemn woods, and beams have seldom smiled,
How oft I walk and muse deep in some far, dim wild

And thou dark notch, Aldara's horrent pass,
Who with untrembling heart can gaze on thee,
Walled by the scowling precipice? Alas!
There is a terror in the very tree
That shakes his savage arms menacingly
At the lone wanderer who starts in fear
Amid the darkness that must always be,
Spread like a pall upon that region drear,
And sees for Murder's blow prepared the victim's bier.

The deep of Night! Lo, how the Eve-like Moon
Sits blessed and blessing mid her starry flowers;
There is a dying cadence in the tune
Swept from the waters, and the mountain towers
Serener still: do they not feel the hours
Are holiest now, while silvered tree and bird
Dream noiselessly amid the breathless bowers,
And you would feel profane the gentlest word
If aught but worship in its mellow cadence stirr'd!

Is there no voice?—Lean low the reverent ear—
What lightly shook the leaf? There is no breeze
On all the star-lit mountains, and the mere
Is windless—yet a tremble in the trees
Makes strange, sweet music: from the far-off leas
Sweeps its soft echoes through the wondering air—
And now 'tis heard again—the central Seas
Listen amid their fields of moonlight there—
'Tis the adoring Earth who breathes her Evening Prayer!

ADVENTURE WITH A MANIAC.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

Peter Winter was one of the early settlers in Arkansas,—a bold, hardy man—made of just such stuff as is necessary to the conquering and subduing of a new and wild country. His cabin was close by the White River, and ere many years he had a broad piece of land smiling under the influence of successful cultivation. His time was about equally divided between the field and the forest, though he had more liking for the latter than for the former, the rifle being a more agreeable companion than the plow. His family consisted of his wife and two children. Susan Winter was not yet thirty-five, and though living in the wild woods, yet she was fair and modest, and possessed a fund of sound sense that would have done credit to a better education. Andrew, a bright, apt boy, was six years of age, while little Lucy, the laughing, romping girl, was only four.

One evening, as Peter and his family were at supper, the door was opened, and a large, powerfully-built man entered.

"Ah, John—is this you?" said Peter, as he recognized his visitor.

"Yes," answered the new-comer, in thick tones, at the same time reeling towards the fire-place.

"What?—drunk again, John?" resumed the hunter, in a reproachful tone.

"Been drunk a fornight, Pete," grumbled the man, looking up with a vacant leer, evidently unable to see distinctly. "Give me a bed, old feller."

"Certainly you shall have a bed, John. But won't you have something to eat first?" asked Susan.

"Eh—Suke Winter? Egad—I will eat." He sat up to the table, but his appetite proved treacherous, and he moved back again without tasting food. As he gained the chimney-corner he drew a bottle from his pocket, but it was empty.

"Drank the last drop just afore I come in," he said, his utterance becoming more thick. "Give us a tip of yer own bottle, Pete."

"Haven't got a drop for you, John."

"Not a drop of whiskey?"

"Not a drop."

"Singe a painter, old boy! What are ye comin' to?"

Peter made some careless reply, and then urged the poor fellow to go and lie down. He saw that he was growing more stupid every moment, and that he would soon fall from his chair. After a while the man consented to go, and his host led him to a place in one corner, where a buffalo skin was hung up for a screen, and behind which was a bed of bear-skins. John was soon asleep, and Peter returned and finished his supper.

John Armstrong was a good hunter; a firm friend; ready to help in times of need; and "death on Injuns." He lived nowhere in particular, but found a home anywhere. A week or two would be spent in hunting—then he would carry his skins to the nearest settlement and purchase rum—and then came a spree which lasted while he could get fuel for the fatal flame.

When Peter got ready to go to bed, he went in and looked at his guest, whom he found just as he had left him.

"It's too bad!" he said, as he came out. "What a noble fellow he is when he's himself. How a man can do so is more than I can understand."

"Poor John!" murmured Susan. Armstrong had ever been a warm friend to both herself and husband, and had, on two occasions, saved them from the Indian tomahawk and scalping-knife. So they loved him, even now.

The hunter arose with the first dawn of day, and ere he dressed himself he went to see how his guest fared. John was still sleeping soundly, though the scattered skins told that he had been very uneasy during the night.

"I must go out and look at my traps," said Peter, after he had dressed, "and if John wakes up before I get back, you'd better fix him up some warm drink, and get him to eat if he can. If he wants whiskey tell him he must wait until I come. I shall not be gone over an hour; so you may have breakfast ready by then."

The husband took his rifle and went out, and shortly afterwards the wife called up her two children and dressed them, and then proceeded to build her fire. After this she cut some steak from a quarter of venison which hung near the door, and then began to think what she should fix up for her unfortunate guest. At the expiration of about half an hour John Armstrong got up and came out. Susan was upon the point of speaking to him, but when she looked at his face she started back in affright. She had never before seen a face look so pale and deathly—she had never seen eyes glare and sparkle so, nor look so wild and panther-like—and she had never heard a man's teeth grind and grate as his did then.

"John!" she finally uttered, "what is the matter?"

He glared at her, and then at the children, but spoke not a word.

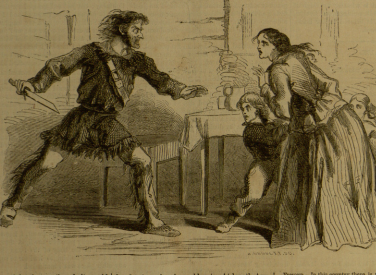
"Don't you want something to eat, John?"

He glared again from her to the two little ones, and then turned to the door and went out.

"Don't be afraid, Andy," the mother said, as the children clung to her dress. "John is a good man—he won't hurt you. He's only sick now."

"But he looked at me so, mamma. Oh! how sick he must be!"

Before Susan could make any reply to her boy the door opened, and Armstrong re-entered the cabin. He had a long hunting-knife in his right hand, while in his left he carried a piece of rope, or halter-cord. He stopped near the threshold and glared around the room—there was but one room in the place. His eyes were wild and burning, his lips bloodless and compressed, and his hair standing up like quills over his huge head.



"Ye're afeared o' me, eh?" he whispered, in a shuddering, shivering tone, at the same time throwing the cord upon the floor, and grasping his knife more firmly.

"No, no, John," uttered Susan, as plainly as she could speak, with her heart thumping and leaping as though it would burst its bonds. "I am not afraid, for I know you would not harm me. You love me too well for that, don't you, good John?"

"Love ye?" he echoed, with a sharp, grating hiss. "If I loved ye less I might let ye stay in this cussed world. But I'm a-goin' to send you out of it, Susan Winter—you and yer children! I've got to do it! Ye must die!—die!—die!"

There were specks of white froth upon the madman's bloodless lips, and his whole face had assumed a look perfectly Satanic. Susan Winter had been at first almost powerless, but when she first realized that her little ones were in mortal danger her mother's love begot a mother's fortitude. The terrible truth burst upon her that Armstrong was laboring under a fit of *mania a potu!* She had heard of such a thing, and she knew how dangerous it was. She knew that the rum-maniac would turn his direst hate upon those whom he had loved best when sober. She clasped her children to her side, and shrank away into the extreme corner of the room.

"Ye must die!" the madman growled. "I've been commanded to kill ye!"

"No, no, John! Oh! you could not kill us!"

"Not kill ye! Why, what a cussed shame to see sich varmints as you a livin'! You'd kill me quick enough, wildcat! Don't I know how ye've plotted agin me? Don't I know how ye've held a knife at my throat for years? Git out, you she-devil! Give me the whelps! I'll take their heads off first, and then off comes yourn!"

As Armstrong ceased speaking he advanced towards the frightened group. Susan cast her eyes about, but there was no way of escape. There was but one door, and though the maniac had left that open, yet he was between them and it. The windows, three in number, were small, and set high from the floor, and were guarded by cross-bars at that, to keep wild animals out. Nor was there any weapon at hand with which to defend herself. But of defence she could not think, for John Armstrong was one of the most powerful men in the country.

"Mercy!" she shrieked, as the raving man strode up.

"Devil!" he hissed, from between his tightly-set teeth. As he spoke he aimed a blow at her breast with his left hand, but though she dodged, and received the stroke upon her shoulder, yet it sent her reeling to the floor.

But the brave woman thought not of pain then. The cries of her children, sounding shrill and loud, mingled with the curses of the madman, aroused every spark of courage a mother can feel, and she was quickly upon her feet. She looked upon the scene before her, and while a stifled cry of more than mortal anguish burst from her lips, she staggered a few steps forward, and there stopped.

The maniac was by the open door, where he had first stood, with little Lucy crushed tight between his huge knees, while the boy was held by the long, tangled curls of the head. The little fellow, in his struggles, had raised his hands, and Armstrong had them both firmly clutched with the hair. When the mother first loooked the boy's head was bent back—the white throat upturned—and the gleaming knife raised for the fatal stroke! In a few moments more the woman would be childless!

"JOHN!" she cried, in a tone of such exquisite agony that even the madman stayed his hand and looked up.

The mother knew that the respite could be but for a few short seconds. Great drops of fine, thick foam were gathered upon the madman's lips, and his eyes burned more fiercely than before. If she moved towards him, the blow would surely fall; and if she did nothing it must fall! A gleam of hope shot through her soul. With a mighty effort—an effort such as men sometimes make to seem calm in the face of death—she assumed a pleasant look, and smiled upon the murder-minded man.

"John," she spoke, as calmly and honestly as though she were calling him from peaceful quiet, "you cannot do it so. Let me hold the boy, and then you cut his head off! Wouldn't that be the better way?"

"Egad, it would," the man returned, with great satisfaction.

"Oh! don't kill me, mamma!" the poor boy shrieked. The girl was so crushed that she could not speak.

"You must die, Andrew!" the mother returned, with a cold look, but with a pang at the heart that gave her pain for months.

"Now hold him tight!" the man said, passing the two little purple hands out for Susan to take.

"Never fear," she replied. She said no more. Armstrong stood with his back to the open door, and as he released his hold upon the boy's hands, she gathered all her reserved strength for the effort, and leaped against him like a bounding panther. With her bowed head and with her clenched hands she struck him full in the pit of the stomach, and he fell backward upon the broad stepping-stone like a gnarled log. In an instant Susan shut the door, and in another instant she had shoved the stout oaken bar into its place.

The mother gathered her children to her bosom and bore them to her bed. The boy was almost senseless from fright, while the girl was totally overcome by the cruel pressure she had been subjected to. But ere Susan could bestow further care upon them the madman had revived, and commenced to kick at the door. He cursed and swore, and kicked with all his might, but the stout bar withstood all his efforts. The trembling woman dared not speak—she could not. At length Armstrong gave up the effort and went away. Susan ran to one of the windows and she saw him go into the shed. When he came out he had an axe in his hand.

And now the maniac swore that every head should be split open if the door were not unbarred. Susan Winter spoke not—she only prayed to God that her husband might come. Soon the blows of the sharp axe began to fall quick and hard upon the door. The mother shrank away to the side of her children and listened. At length large splinters fell upon the floor of the cabin—another blow—another—and another—and the bar was cut in twain! As the door flew open the frantic woman uttered one wild, piercing shriek, and sank upon the bed, gathering her children beneath her bosom.

But hark! What sound is that? The heavy tread of the maniac—then another tread, light and bounding—then a dull sound, as of a heavy blow—and then a quaking of the cabin, as a ponderous body fell to the floor.

"SUSAN! WIFE!"

She started up and saw her husband. She put forth her arms, and, pale and cold, without power, without life, she sank upon his bosom. He laid her gently upon the bed, and then, with the cord which was still upon the floor, he securely bound the arms and ankles of the inanimate maniac.

When little Andrew could speak, he told his father all he could remember; but ere long Susan revived sufficiently to relate all that had transpired. At first Peter Winter determined to ride Armstrong off to jail; but upon second thought, he concluded to watch by him till he had recovered. And he did so. On the third day the poor inebriate was sober, and able to walk, and having told him all he had done, Peter opened his door and let him pass out. John spoke not a word, but with his head bowed, and his hands clasped upon his brow, he walked away.

Just one year from that time, as Peter Winter and his family sat at supper, the cabin door was pushed open, and a hunter entered. The children cried out in terror, the boy clinging to his father, while the girl sought the protection of her mother.

"John Armstrong!" uttered Peter, gazing up into a bold, frank, manly face.

"Yes, Peter," the new-comer returned, while a convulsive shudder shook his heavy frame. "It is old John; but if you can ever love me again, tell your children not to fear me. Tell 'em John Armstrong hasn't put liquor to his lips since the day they saw him last. And tell 'em, too, that he never will again, while he has life and sense. *Tell 'em that*, Peter—TELL 'EM THAT!"

On the next night John Armstrong sat by the blazing fire, and the children were upon his knees. Their mother had told them how "uncle John" had twice saved her own and their father's lives, and they forgot the terrible hour of his madness in gratitude for his former goodness, and in the confidence which his present manhood inspired.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

☞ *All the back numbers of the* LEDGER, *from June 7th*, 1856, *up to the present date, can be had at our office, in quantities or by the single copy.*

A NEW R[illegible]ER.—The story of "Richard Hoffman" was commenced in the LEDGER of January 16. It is a charming tale, to be convinced of which fact it is only necessary for you to read the portion of the story in the present number. *You cannot help being delighted with it.*

YOUNG NEW YORK.—The reason why the revolutionary patriots were successful in their great struggle for independence must be sought in their history from the settlement of Jamestown and the landing of the Pilgrims down to the first volley fired at Lexington. In the first place, the settlers of this country and their children were people of noble moral aspirations and fervid piety. They could govern their own passions, exercise severe and long-continued self-denial, respected the Sabbath, and believed in and worshiped God. Hence they could and did make and administer their own laws wisely, and became able to "take care of themselves" in every respect. As their purposes were high, and noble, and unselfish, they could endure privation and suffering with unflinching fortitude. And above all, having won their liberty, they were able to preserve it; being left to do their own will in regard to their own affairs, without the least check or restraint from any earthly power, they were great enough to repress all the lower passions of human nature, and legally and peacefully unite to work out a scheme of common government and common blessing. Other nations have sought to "gain their liberty," and failed; others still have "gained their liberty," and soon lost it again; simply because they contended only for the vague privilege of doing what they pleased, without regard to high and ennobling purposes.

ITALIANO.—You are mistaken. If you employ as good a lawyer as your opponent has, you will stand as good a chance in any of our courts of law as a native born American would stand under the same circumstances. Our judges are impartial and honorable men, and would be more apt to sympathize with a foreigner under unfavorable circumstances than to treat him unfairly. If you actually have right and justice on your side, all you will have to do will be to see that your witnesses are on hand and that their evidence is properly and thoroughly put on record. Many just causes are lost by lack of evidence which with due care might have been obtained.

HAMILTONIAN, (Canada West.)—The "British Constitution" has nothing to do with questions of divorce. They are regulated by the courts and parliament.

J. W. Y.—Any dress will do for a wedding, if it is not crape. When one is married in the forenoon, the fashionable dress just now is black pants, buff vest, blue frock coat, and white or black cravat. A dark-complexioned man would look best in a white cravat, and vice versa. For the evening, black dress coat, white cravat, white or buff vest, and black pantaloons. With a white vest, one must have an immaculate shirt and cravat, else the effect will be marred. The "last touches" in *little* things are what put the finish on dress, as on everything else.

R. L. P.—Bacon's "Novum Organum," or "New System," can be got at some of the leading book-stores. It would be of no use to you. All of it that is necessary to be known is generally condensed in a few pages of works that treat of the history of philosophy. It was a great work in its day; but later discoveries and later works have to a great extent superseded it for practical use.

MARY.—Fortune-telling is neither a science nor an art, it is a *craft*, and is founded on the cunning of the operator, and the silliness and credulity of the victim. We know no work that gives an account of the different systems of fortune-telling.

H.P.—Who told you that convicts have the letter R stamped upon their foreheads? We know nothing about such matters as you relate in regard to you and your companions lifting the fat man.

B.B.G.—"Like James was" is not a proper phrase. Like is a preposition, and James is nominative to was. "Like *what* James was" would do, but it is awkward.

C. C. C.—That twin business is too deep and medical for us. Ask your physician about it.

EDMOND.—In this country there is no rule or law of heraldry whereby the *right* of any man to the title of "Esquire" can be settled. In England, real esquires are of seven sorts. 1. Esquire's of the king's body, whose number is limited to four. 2. The eldest sons of knights, and their eldest sons born during their lifetime. (It would seem that, in the days of ancient warfare, the knight often took his eldest son into the wars for the purpose of giving him a practical military education, employing him meanwhile as his "esquire.") 3. The eldest sons of youngest sons of peers of the realm. 4. Such as the king invests with the collar of SS, including the king-at-arms, heralds, &c. 5. Esquires to the Knights of the Bath, for life, and their eldest sons. 6. Sheriffs of counties, for life, coroners and justices of the peace, and gentlemen of the royal household, while they continue in their respective offices. 7. Barristers-at-law, doctors of divinity, law and medicine, mayors of towns, and some others, are said to be of scutarial dignity, but not actual esquires. But in England, as in this country, thousands are addressed as "esquires" who have no legal right to the title. In the United States the title has ceased to be distinctive, inasmuch as it has become universal; in fact, its use in some cases would be quite ridiculous, as, for instance, "Daniel Webster, Esquire," "George Washington, Esq.," &c.

CLARA B. says she is subject to violent fits of laughter which not even the biting of her lips can restrain. She is afraid to look people in the face, and the fit comes upon her even while conversing upon the most solemn subjects. She is debarred from society to a great degree by this unfortunate tendency, and is anxious to find a cure for it. We can understand Clara's case and sympathize with her; but the remedy is not so easily prescribed. Young and very sensitive people are very liable to be so affected. Some children are so much afraid of such fits, that they even cry with fear of being set a laughing. It is a convulsive movement; and females, having less control over their feelings in general than men, are most subject to it. When any class of nerves lose their retentive power, it is not easily restored. You will probably outgrow the malady. Marriage, perhaps, would cure you.

A FATHER IN TROUBLE.—You could probably recover damages of the man who has blasted the character of your child, and blighted the happiness of your family forever, but would it be worth while to endure the exposure of your own family sorrows for the purposes of such revenge? It is difficult to give a person in your situation advice that will be both lastingly beneficial to follow and consoling to receive. Your wounded heart, your daughter's injuries, and your family's distress cry out for revenge—for justice to be dealt out to the fiend who has thus destroyed your peace; and any advice which does not direct you how to gain these objects speedily is looked upon with disfavor, while that which would persuade you to forego them altogether, naturally excites feelings of irritation and of pain. It is our opinion, however, that in this case you would act wisely in foregoing all intention of private revenge, or of public prosecution.

AARON BURR has fallen deeply in love with a young lady whom he has never spoken to, and with whom he finds it thus far impossible to get acquainted. He "suffers tortures from fear that before he can obtain an introduction to the object of his love, some happy fellow who shares the bliss of her acquaintance will win her from him forever." He should do as the man whose name he has assumed would have done under like circumstances: try every possible expedient to get introduced to the lady by some one who knows her, and failing in that, call upon her at once without an introduction, state your case frankly and respectfully, and ask her permission to visit her as an acquaintance merely, until she can ascertain whether or not she will accept you as a lover. No woman would be offended at a man for thus falling in love with her, or for thus telling her of it.

ROCK ISLAND.—You have no right to pay a young lady *marked attention* for two years unless you intend to marry her, or without engaging yourself to her. Your "marked attentions" for so long a period, of course keep others from addressing her with a view to marriage, and lead the community to *suppose* that you are engaged. The holding of yourself aloof from an engagement under such circumstances, so as to be able to withdraw your "marked attentions" from her whenever it may suit your convenience, and bestow them elsewhere, is unmanly and contemptible. It has been decided in this State that, under just such circumstances as you mention, a marriage engagement did in fact exist between the parties, and a young lady recovered heavy damages of a man who paid her "marked attention" for some eighteen months, and then married some one else.

SAMSON.—We can not sympathize with you; on the contrary, we sympathize with the other party, whom you say you "attacked and punished with your walking-stick." Physical violence is always to be deprecated, except when one is obliged to defend himself against an attack. We know that there are cases of insult and wrong in which human nature is seemingly tasked beyond her strength, but only seemingly tasked. Any man *can* withhold his hand from aggressive violence if he *will*. We have ourselves been wronged on many occasions, and sometimes deeply and wantonly wronged, but we are glad that we have never so far forgot our own self-respect as to resort for revenge to physical attacks and street-cowhidings. Such low and brutal retaliations should be left to the uncivilized and savage races of men.

FANNY.—Well-bred people are always delicate, but never very formal towards their friends. Delicacy, however, admits of much refined familiarity and neglect of all rules, save those of kind feeling and cheerfulness of mind. There is no rule for discovering whether an invitation to stay longer be sincere or not; this must be tested by the *manner and tone* of the invitation. The feelings tell us best about such matters, almost without reason. People who are only polite by rule are stiff and awkward. It is dangerous to think too much about rules. Better make a blunder now and then. If they are good-natured blunders, they are always forgiven, and sometimes they are much relished and admired.

A LADY READER wants to know "which is the most polite way of getting rid of a gentleman, when he persists in walking with me against my inclination?" A *gentleman* never persists in doing such an ungentlemanly thing. A "polite way" would therefore have no effect upon your annoyer. When people will not take delicate hints, they should bluntly be told to be off; and if, like dogs, they do not understand articulate speech, then some one should properly administer a missile.

A LADY SUBSCRIBER.—Of course the law requires a divorce before marrying again, if you have reason to suppose that your husband is still alive. He may not be dead, although a man who would marry a girl, and then leave her and her child for six years without in any manner aiding or assisting them, does not deserve to live.

GODFREY DULANIE wants to know if a man has any right to control a woman's conduct after he has become engaged to her, and how far such right (if he has any) extends. It is not an easy matter to settle such a question in a paragraph, but we will try to state our opinion on the subject as briefly as a due regard to clearness of expression will allow. The rights of engaged lovers as to the control of each other's conduct are reciprocal, and must be mutually agreed upon and adjusted. The man has a right to control the woman's conduct just so far as he will permit her to control his; and she has a right to control his conduct just so far as she will permit him to control hers. The right must be mutual and equal; and it must be regulated by love, and not by caprice, tyranny, or selfishness. It must in one sense be the spontaneous outgushing of love for the person whose actions are to be controlled, and who is to be controlled solely for his or her good, and not for the selfish satisfaction of the controlling party. This has been called the "bondage of love," which so far from oppressing the affections and loading them with bonds, actually lends them wings.

LARIO.—A few numbers since the following problem in backgammon was given in the LEDGER:—The players are throwing off, and one having only one man on his six point and another on his trey, throws five, deuce; can either of these men be thrown off? Lario says: "Play the man on the sixth point to the four point for your deuce, and then throw it off for your five, leaving the man on the trey point still. That is the only way it can be done." A lady correspondent, writing from Chicago, takes a different view of the matter, and says that it is a cardinal principle of backgammon that when both men *can* be played up they *must* be played up; and therefore that in the case above mentioned both men must be played to the ace point and neither of them be thrown off. Twenty or more correspondents have given the same solution of the problem that Lario gives, and thus far our fair correspondent stands alone; still she may be right. We are not skillful in back gammon, or any other kind of gammon, and shall therefore let our correspondents discuss and settle this question as they please.

ORIOLA, whose delicate hand-writing, and dainty note, and barbed style, proclaim her one of the so-called gentler sex, earnestly requests us to "pitch into *students*"—*all students*, inasmuch as "they are *all* silly and conceited." She says, "They look college, talk college, and walk college, and if they happen to be students of some petty academy, instead of a college, they act still more foolishly and offensively." Oriola closes her communication "with the hope that the time *will* come when students, at the close of the term, will be content to leave the college walls behind them, and not attempt to journey through the vacation with the entire institution—edifice, faculty and all—upon their shoulders." It is possible that most students have never suspected that they deserve such a castigation, and it will do no harm to call their attention to the subject.

MARY.—The verse to which you refer, and which you say you "want to see in the LEDGER so you can learn it and sing it to your baby," runs thus:

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon.
Father will come to his babe in its nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon.
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

SUBSCRIBER.—If a gentleman accompanies a lady to church, where they each own a pew, he should ask her which of the pews she would prefer to occupy, at the same time placing his own at her disposal. When a gentleman has become pretty well acquainted with a lady, it is not obligatory upon him to defer calling upon her until he is invited to do so. But if, after he has called, he is not invited to repeat his visit, he should be careful not to call again too soon. Often times a lady omits to invite visitors to call again, through mere inadvertence; and a discerning man can always tell by her manner whether or not his company is agreeable to her.

A. R. C.—You should not inculcate in the minds of your children a taste for gipsy freedom and lawlessness, and erratic ideas and practices. Such a course will unfit them for life, and terminate in poverty and wretchedness. You should rather teach your children that departure from the tried and approved paths of life, in thinking or acting, however chivalrous, are dangerous; and that success and happiness depend more on prudence, with mediocrity of talents and learning, than on profound acquirements or transcendent genius so prone to be misguided.

G. M. O.—Yes. The word *gent* is one of the very lowest in the language, and is never used, either in speech or writing, by well-informed people. An abbreviation of gentleman, thus, Gent., spelled with a capital G and a period, is used in writing and printing, but never in speech. The plural, gentlemen, is not abbreviated Gents., but Messrs., which in reading is pronounced, or rather read, *gentlemen*, or (if the reader prefers) *sirs*, and not "Messers," as some readers are in the habit of calling it.

DON QUIXOTE submits the following sentence: "And, therefore I am in doubt whether I shall do well to send him to the government your highness has conferred on him," etc., and wishes to know if it is grammatically correct. No; *whether* always requires *or no*, or, *or not*, after it, thus: "I am in doubt whether I shall do well or not," etc. "To send" is also a very stiff and awkward expression. "I am in doubt whether I shall do well or not *in sending* him," etc., or "if I send him," etc., would either of them be much better.

1858.—It is impossible to tell with precision how old our mother earth is. Like other "mothers" she does not seem willing to reveal the facts of her age. The chronologists who take the Mosaic account of the creation in a literal sense as the basis of their calculations, disagree to a wide extent, and the geologists who argue that the earth is millions of years old, agree among themselves no better than their rival disputants.

FRED is engaged to one girl and loves another. "What shall I do?" he asks. If he marries at all he should marry a woman whom he loves. But he had no business to engage himself to a girl before he was certain he loved her. Having done this, he must suffer the penalty. If he marries anybody else, she can sue him for breach of promise. Fred must act with much circumspection.

CADET.—Graduates of the Military Academy at West Point have to enter the service of the United States. None but graduates of the Naval Academy at Annapolis are appointed to midshipmen's berths on the United States' vessels. In the LEDGER of March 16th, 1857, which can be ordered through any news-dealer, you will find full particulars in relation to both the Military and the Naval Academy.

PHILIP LANCEY.—It is, of course, quite a hardship to be debarred from enjoying any and all of the amusements of your comrades; but never mind. Study hard and achieve some decided intellectual and scholastic triumph, so your father will feel proud of you, and then he may be more liberal and lenient.

DROMIO sends us an illegible manuscript, saying it was written in haste, and modestly requests us to "make all necessary corrections, etc." The "etc." we take to stand for throwing the manuscript into the fire, which we cheerfully do. It burns very well.

PRACTICE.—We do not tell who writes articles for the LEDGER, or the real names of such contributors as write over *nomes des plumes*. We have a particular partiality for keeping our own affairs to ourself, and of letting others mind their own business.

ZERUBBABEL.—You and your sweetheart, being of age, have of course the legal and moral right to marry whenever you choose; but you must yourselves alone decide whether it would be prudent and judicious to do so against the wishes of her parents.

CARLOS.—It is not a good sign when a boy wants to get out of the reach of his parents' supervisory influence. It would be better for you to stay near your family, and so to behave yourself that they will not feel called upon to reprove you.

VALENTINE.—An insane person whose friends are unable to maintain him, would be taken care of at the State Asylum for the Insane, at the public's expense. You should lay the matter before the overseers for the poor of your town.

G. P.—Yes, much "harm can be done by the performance of unobjectionable plays." Things in themselves harmless can be made hurtful by an improper treatment, use, or performance of them.

TOLEDO.—Your conduct, as described in your letter is shameful, and so is that of the ungrateful wife. You should break off the acquaintance immediately.

GEORGE HOFFMAN.—You had better advertise for your missing brother in an Australian newspaper, as he was in that country when you last heard from him.

NELLY.—You must not suppose because we said "poets were born, not made," etc., that every one *born* is a poet. Your "lines" are beneath criticism.

D. N. C.—We do not make any such bargains. We want no contributions from new sources, and when we do want such we shall pay cash for them.

CHARLES W.—We know nothing about "the requisites for going upon the stage." Judging from your letter, we should say you had better go to school.

W. L. H.—Call on the lady and ascertain whether she has received your letter or not, and, if she has received it, why she has not answered it.

LETTIE.—You had better wait for advances from the other side. A girl cannot be too cautious in matters pertaining to love.

JOHN H. H.—Yes; a postmaster has a right to take newspapers from their wrappers. Peter Parley is still alive.

M. B. OWEN.—The back numbers you mention will cost twenty-eight cents.

GODFREY.—No. Your friend cannot get a divorce on such grounds.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*